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# STARLOG

JUNE #215

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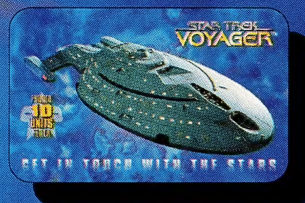
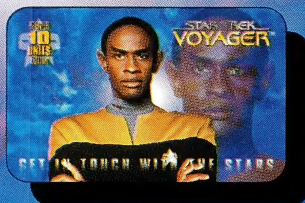
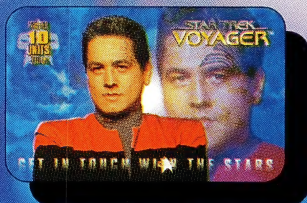
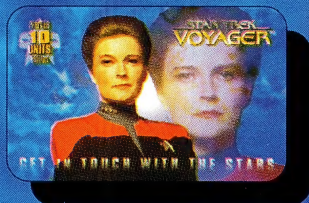
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**Video Game  
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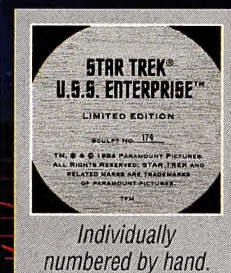


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# STARLOG®

NUMBER 215  
JUNE 1995

THE SCIENCE FICTION UNIVERSE®

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Congo Photo: Copyright 1995 Paramount Pictures



There's danger in the Congo. For a guided tour, see page 40.

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# WARLOCK™



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Six different runestones are scattered throughout this issue of Starlog. You must locate and identify (on the sweepstakes entry card below) the pages the runestones are found in order to be eligible for one of the prizes.

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Warlock™ Super NES® or Genesis™ game, Super NES® or Genesis™ deck, Framed Warlock movie poster, Warlock™: The Armageddon home video.

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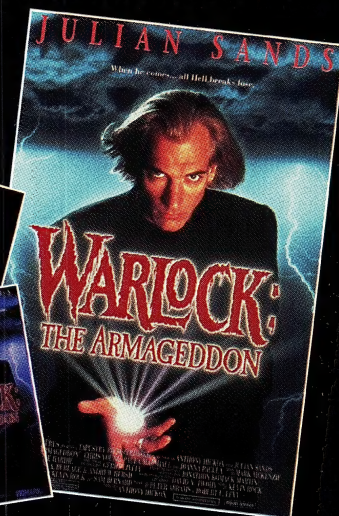
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This contest is open to all, except employees (and freelancers) associated with Trimark Interactive, Vidmark Entertainment, Acclaim Entertainment, Inc., The StarLog Group and all of their affiliates, subsidiaries, suppliers, licensees and advertising agencies. No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. All entries must be received in the StarLog offices no later than June 30, 1995. A random drawing will be conducted of all postcards. Prizes will be sent out as available. Please note: no responsibility is assumed for any lost, misdirected or late entries.

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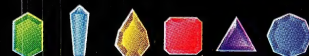
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## The Runestones:



Page # \_\_\_\_\_

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Fill out and mail this entry to: Acclaim® Warlock™ Sweepstakes Starlog 475 Park Avenue South NY NY 10016



# MEDIALOG

## BIOGRAPHICAL FUTURES

It's that time again: The new fall TV season schedules will be announced later this month. *The X-Files* will, needless to say, be back, but at presstime, the fates of network television's other genre shows (namely *Earth 2*, *seaQuest*, *Lois & Clark*, *VR. 5*, *Sliders*, *Legend*) were mostly undecided. However, *M.A.N.T.I.S.* looks like it's D.E.A.D.

As for syndicated fare, Warner Bros. Television is expected to determine the future of its PTEN programs (*Babylon 5*, *Kung Fu: The Legend Continues*) by mid-June. Perhaps a move to the WB Network? Both of Para-

West." Anderson is an 1870s novelist who creates a Western dime novel hero, Nicodemus Legend, while de Lancie's a scientific genius. Together, they sort of bring the fictional Legend to real life to right wrongs. Bob Balaban co-stars. The TV movie premiere of this SF-tinged Western adventure guest starred Stephanie Beacham and Tim Thomerson.

Now part of the syndicated *Bohbot's Amazin' Adventures* is *Turbocharged Thunderbirds* (yet another revision of the Gerry Anderson *Thunderbirds*). Footage from the classic show is interwoven, mostly for alleged camp value, with new sequences featuring actors John Stewart and Travis Webster in their spaceship *Hacker Command*.

*ReBoot*, the computerized animation series seen on ABC Saturday mornings, has been renewed for a second season. There'll be 10 new episodes added.

*Pinky and the Brain* are getting their very own animated series on the new WB Kids' Network this fall. And what will they do in the 13 episodes? Why, what they do every night: try to conquer the world!

The WB Kids' Network is also picking up reruns of *Animaniacs* (produced by Warner Bros. Animation & Amblin, previously aired on Fox). New *Animaniacs* episodes will be added to the mix.

Fox has renewed two of their Saturday morning heroic entries, *X-Men* and *The Tick*. *X-Men* also continues on the Fox weekday afternoon cartoon schedule with the animated *Batman* (now *The Adventures of Batman and Robin*) returning to weekday service.

*Tales from the Cryptkeeper* has been slaughtered. The cartoon revision of the HBO-Fox live-action series won't be back for a third season. Also going, going, gone: *Skeleton Warriors*, *WildC.A.T.S.*

**Updates:** *Johnny Mnemonic* has a new debut date: June. *Species* (previewed in STARLOG #214) has relocated to a July release. *Lord of Illusions*, first rescheduled for a premiere this month, has been delayed to August.

And actually, K.W. Jeter isn't just doing one novel sequel to *Blade Runner*. He's writing two.

**Genre People:** Stan Winston will create the special FX for the *Planet of the Apes* remake. Arnold Schwarzenegger is still being eyed to star, although he hasn't committed to the project. Phillip (*Dead Calm*) Noyce may direct. Winston will also work on the *Island of Dr. Moreau* remake.

Tim Burton has acquired film rights to two cult trading cards published by Topps: the infamous *Mars Attacks!* (co-created by Len Brown, see STARLOG #203) and the later companion follow-up *Dinosaurs Attack!* (created by Gary Gerani). Both card sets have been considered as movies previously, with Joe Dante once a possibility to direct a *Mars Attacks!* flick.

Next up for Russell Mulcahy—who helmed *Highlander* and *The Shadow*—is another high-concept genre film, *Vampires*. Don (*ALIEN*) Jakoby wrote the movie, which

focuses on a Vatican-backed SWAT/commando team that battles the undead.

With memoirs by William Shatner, George Takei and Nichelle Nichols already on the shelves (and although he penned *I Am Not Spock* years ago), Leonard Nimoy has begun work on his autobiography. He's collaborating on it with noted *Trek* novelist J.M. Dillard.

Incidentally, James Doohan and *Trek* novelist Peter David are at work on Doohan's bio. Walter Koenig (already represented by 1979's *Chekov's Enterprise*) is writing his autobiography solo. Majel Barrett says she'll wait a few years to do a book, while DeForest Kelley has no plans for a memoir.

Shatner's first *Trek* novel has a new title. Once known as *Kirk's War*, it's now *The Ashes of Eden*. Garfield and Judith Reeves-Stevens collaborated with the actor on this book, which is due out shortly.

**Character Castings:** Denzel Washington, Russell (*The Quick and the Dead*) Crowe and Kelly Lynch star in *Virtuosity*, an SF thriller involving virtual reality.

Drew Barrymore, Debi (*Goodfellas*) Mazar, Don "The Dragon" Wilson and Ed Begley Jr. are also in *Batman Forever*.

Bill Pullman—who deals with *Casper the Friendly Ghost* later this month—romances Ellen DeGeneres in her first movie comedy. Pullman, however, has the title role. He's *Mr. Wrong*.

## FILM FANTASY CALENDAR

All dates are *extremely* subject to change. Movies deemed especially tentative are denoted by asterisks. Changes are reported in "Updates."

**May:** *Casper*, *Tales from the Hood*, *First Knight*.

**June:** *Batman Forever*, *Pocahontas*, *Judge Dredd\**, *Apollo 13*, *Congo*, *Johnny Mnemonic*.

**July:** *Species*.

**August:** *Waterworld\**, *Mortal Kombat*.

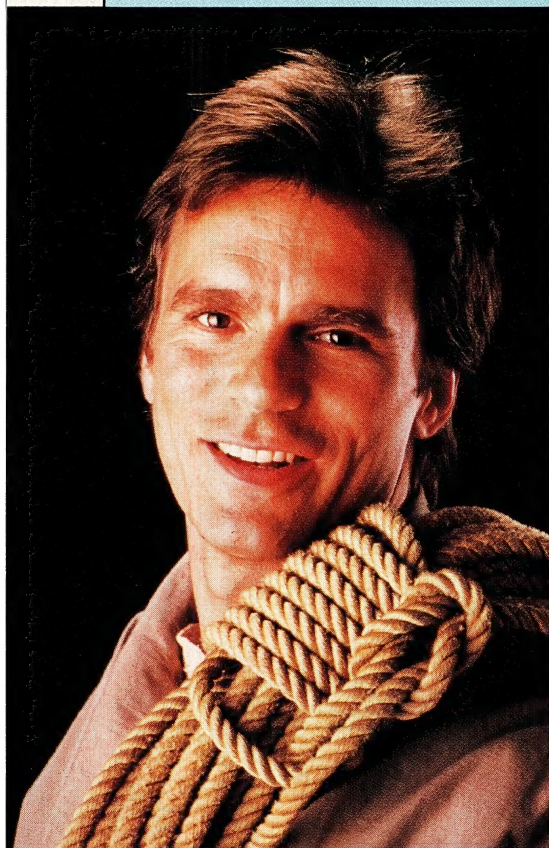
**Summer:** *Mary Reilly*, *Virtuosity\**, *Lord of Illusions\**.

Disney and RKO are teaming on a remake of *Mighty Joe Young*.

Jack Finney's *Time and Again* is currently being adapted by screenwriter Richard (A *River Runs Through It*) Friedenberg. Robert Redford plans to direct this classic time-travel romance (and may also star). Finney's sequel novel *From Time to Time* is now in bookstores.

It was previously thought all but unfilmable due to the protagonist's character arc, but plans are going ahead to adapt *Thinner*, one of Stephen King's "Richard Bachman" books. Michael McDowell scripted. Tom (*The Langoliers*) Holland directs, with shooting to begin next month. As for readers who don't know the story's premise, a Gypsy curse leads to a sort of ultimate diet movie—a perfect companion to *Heavyweights*.

—David McDonnell



MacGyver Photo: ABC

**MacGyver's Richard Dean Anderson fixes up Western adventure in *Legend*.**

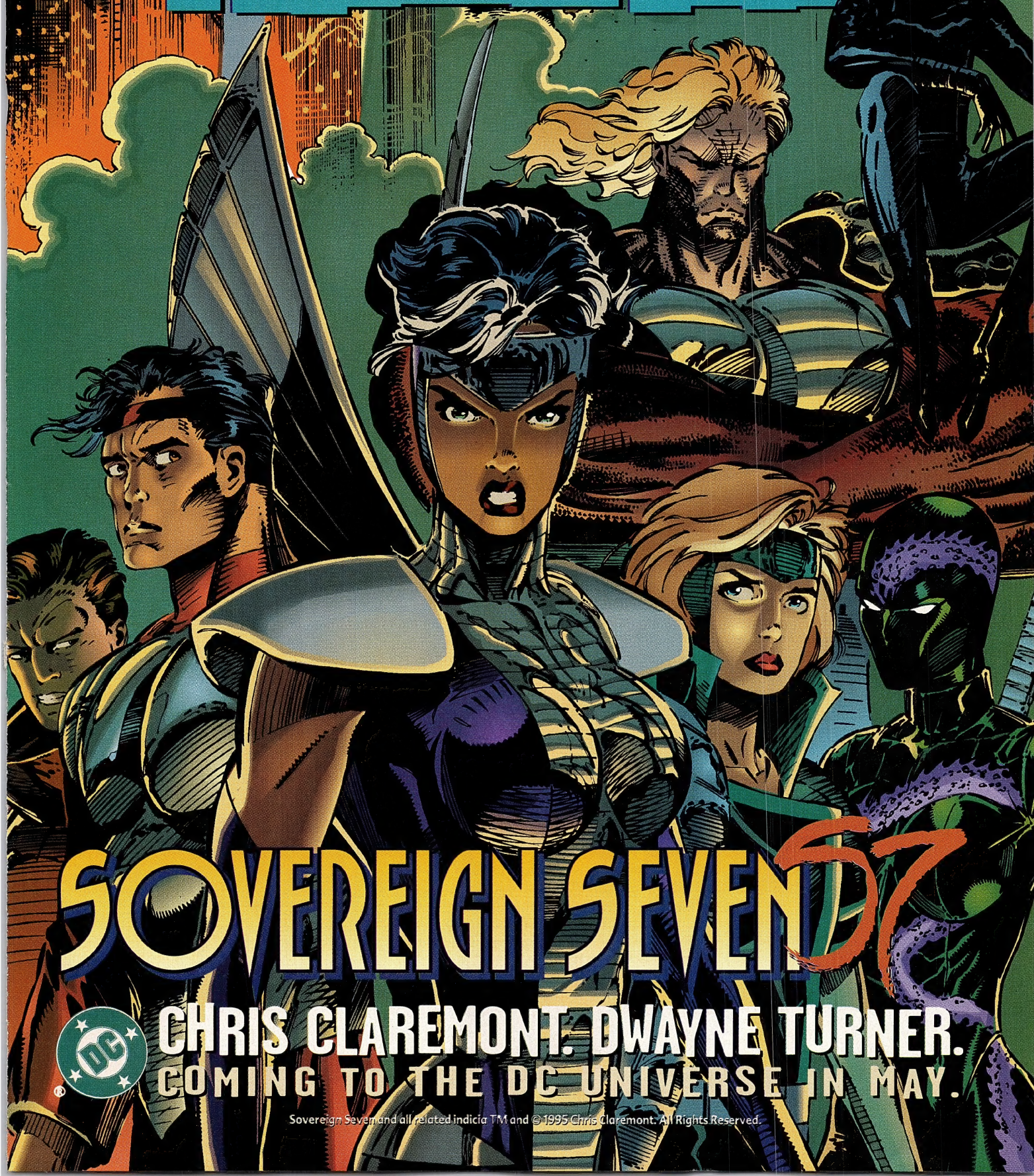
mount's *Trek* spin-offs (UPN's *Voyager*, the syndicated *Deep Space Nine*) will continue. The jury's still out on the rest of the syndicated (*Forever Knight*, *Hercules*, *Space Precinct*) and cable (*TekWar*) pack. Only *RoboCop* is officially terminated.

**Genre TV:** The screenplay for the TV movie/pilot *Star Command* is by *Next Generation* vet Melinda Snodgrass (STARLOG #137). Chad Everett, Morgan Fairchild and Jay (*The Boy Who Could Fly*) Underwood head the cast.

Richard Dean Anderson has returned to television alongside fan favorite John de Lancie in UPN's *Legend*. It's basically "*The Adventures of Brisco County Jr.* and *Remington Steele* Without a Clue in *The Wild, Wild*



# STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND



## SOVEREIGN SEVEN 57

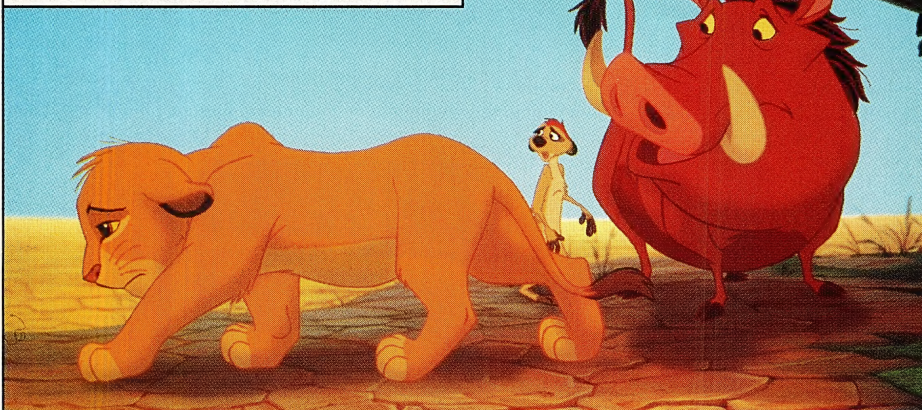


CHRIS CLAREMONT. DWAYNE TURNER.  
COMING TO THE DC UNIVERSE IN MAY.

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# VIDEOLOG



Don't be sad! *The Lion King* will be hitting the laserdisc jungle later this year.

## STILL AGAIN

**S**ix new episodes of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* are about to beam in from Paramount Home Video. Episodes 57-62 are priced at \$14.95 each in VHS and Beta. Look for: "The Vengeance Factor," "The Defector," "The Hunted," "The High Ground," "Deja Q" and "A Matter of Perspective." Laserdisc editions include two episodes per album, priced at \$34.95 in CLV.

**Laserdisc:** In the works from Image Entertainment is a super-deluxe edition of Robert Wise's timeless classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. An inside source reports that the original camera negative has been located, along with the original Bernard Herrmann stereo recordings. In addition to pristine picture and sound, the supplementary materials will make this album the must-buy of the year. Director Wise, producer Julian Blaustein and many of the surviving cast members will be supplying their comments for the supplementary audio track, and the album producers have contacted various collectors for access to the original flying saucer miniature and Gort's head. Additionally, almost 80 unpublished behind-the-scenes stills have recently been unearthed from studio archives, and will be included. No release date has been announced yet, but it might appear as soon as late summer or early fall.

**Animation:** It's another record-breaker for Disney. *The Lion King* has sold over 26 million copies, making it the home video bestseller of all time. The previous all-time bestsellers were also Disney titles: *Fantasia*, *Beauty & the Beast* and *Aladdin*. The laserdisc edition of *The Lion King* won't be around until September, however; apparently Disney is concerned about video pirates using the laserdisc as a master from which to make high-quality counterfeit copies. So, it won't be until autumn that you'll see *The Lion King* in two widescreen packages: one CLV (\$29.95) and one CAV (\$99.95, boxed set with extras).

All of this hasn't gone unnoticed by other animation companies, who are already riding

Disney's coattails in anticipation of the studio's theatrical debut of *Pocahontas* next month. At least four versions of the legendary love story between a Native American woman and 17th-century colonist John Smith are ready to hit video retailers, some arriving before the Disney film. UAV Entertainment has an animated musical, *Young Pocahontas*, and also anticipates a release in multimedia CD-ROM. Sony Wonder is continuing its tag-along game of paralleling Disney releases with their own titles—*The Jungle King*, *Snow White* and *The Night Before Christmas*—has *Pocahontas*, also an animated musical (48 minutes long), as part of its ongoing Enchanted Tales series. Good-Times Entertainment has its own animated *Pocahontas* already in release, but will re-promote their video at the same time the Disney film opens theatrically. The only live-action telling is Hemdale's *The Legend of Pocahontas*, of which they expect to sell more than one million units at the sell-through price of \$19.95.

Not to be outdone, Buena Vista Home Video is planning to release next year the animated feature sequels to Thomas M. Disch's *Brave Little Toaster* series of children's books. Next up are *The Brave Little Toaster Goes to Mars* and *The Brave Little Toaster Goes to School*; both are to be produced by Kushner-Locke with Hyperion Entertainment, who produced the first *Brave Little Toaster* feature.

**Cheapside:** The live-action feature *The Flintstones* starring John Goodman and Rick Moranis has been repriced to \$14.98 in VHS from MCA/Universal Home Video.

Also hitting \$14.98 price level is the animated *Ferngully: The Last Rainforest*, but Tom Hanks in *Big* can now be found for only \$9.98 in VHS only.

**Coming Attractions:** Home viewers can look forward to the release of several special editions of the James Bond films from MGM/UA later this year when the studio begins theatrical screenings of the newest adventure, *Goldeneye*, with new 007 Pierce Brosnan.

—David Hutchison

# STARLOG

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# GAMELOG

## MEAN STREETS

It's a mad, mad, mad, mad world out there—especially in Gotham City these days. Inmates have broken out of Arkham Asylum, and they're going to take out their aggressions on that poor beleaguered town. Only the Dark Knight can stop them, and he had better be more animated than ever before to do it! *The Adventures of Batman & Robin*, new from Konami for the Super Nintendo (\$64.99) and based on the popular animated series shown on Fox, pits the hero against his fiercest foes in eight stages.



Get animated with *The Adventures of Batman & Robin*.

Before each stage (each of which are divided into several areas), you choose which items you'll need in your utility belt, including Batarangs, a grappling gun, stars, spray guns, plastic explosives, smoke bombs, a gas mask, flashlight, X-ray goggles and a master key (available for Stage 3 only). In Stage 1, "Amused to Death," the Joker plans to slay you at an amusement park filled with explosives. There can be "No Green Peace" in Gotham either, as Poison Ivy's carnivorous plants are quickly becoming an unfriendly forest. From there, the Penguin conducts some "Fowl Play" at the Gotham City Art Museum, forcing you to enlist Robin and pin the jailbird's feathers.

It's back to solo action for Batman in the next stage, a "Tale of the Cat," as he must chase the Catwoman through Gotham's alleys and over its rooftops. Taking to the Batmobile, the Dark Knight must then race through the city streets when Two-Face creates major "Trouble in Transit." Provided you don't let fear, or the Scarecrow, overwhelm you in "Perchance to Scream," it's up to you to save Commissioner Gordon and his daughter Barbara from the Riddler in "Riddle Me This..." Finally, it's a climactic showdown against all the criminals of Gotham in "The Gauntlet." And if facing all eight opponents wasn't bad enough, you can expect trouble from the likes of Man-Bat and Clay-face as well!

*The Adventures of Batman & Robin* is very enjoyable, and true to the TV show's

ambience. The animation and graphics are very smooth and colorful, and the sound is exciting and powerful. If the game suffers any problems, it's that Robin doesn't really play a major role in this single-player game; it would have been more interesting to offer a two-player option, or let you choose to be either Batman or Robin, depending on what-ever skills are needed for the stage. Another slight annoyance is the lack of voices, which is replaced by a droning blip sound as the story unfolds. Otherwise, spending many Dark Knights on this game is worthwhile.

**Bloody Pulp:** If you think Gotham City's a tough place, then just imagine how roleplayers may feel about *The World of Bloodshadows*, among the latest in West End Games' MasterBook series (\$30). The MasterBook system is used to roleplay in any game universe with any options, though it's specifically designed for use with West End game settings. In the case of *Bloodshadows*, pulp fiction is combined with dark fantasy—actually, more like Mickey Spillane meets

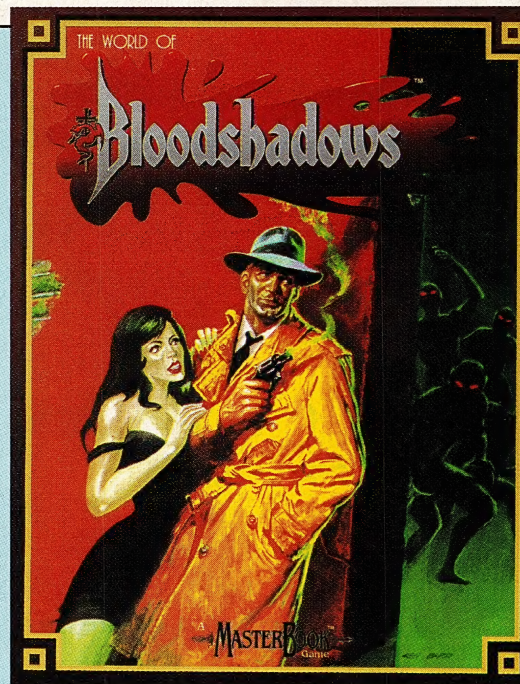


Cheaters, rejoice! *Rebel Assault: The Official Insider's Guide* is here!

Bram Stoker, complete with trenchcoat-wearing gumshoes and vampires. Such is the world of Marl, where magic and technology are weapons exceeded only by that which is between your shoulders.

The *Bloodshadows* boxed set features a 160-page WorldBook which provides all necessary source material and a beginning adventure; the 176-page MasterBook rule book; two 10-sided dice; and the Master-Deck, a card deck designed for use with the MasterBook game system. Of course, the MasterBook is a necessity to play in *The World of Bloodshadows*; otherwise, you may think the game...well, bites.

**New Magicks:** Of course, there are some places that are just plain beyond human comprehension, especially if that place houses magick. Such is the World of Darkness, where an ancient war pits mages of the awak-



Extremely "pulp" fiction abounds in *The World of Bloodshadows*.

ened Traditions against the cold Technocracy to decide the fate of humanity's fragile souls. And such is the setting for Steve Jackson Games' *GURPS Mage: The Ascension* (\$19.95), which deals with the question, "If you had the power to change the world, would you?" The 192-page softcover tries to address not only power beyond imagining, but one's reaction to that power, and whether such power can be wielded responsibly.

In addition to offering a lexicon and an index, *GURPS Mage: The Ascension* is broken down into nine chapters. Introductions and origins for the World of Darkness and its environs are made "On the Dark Side," followed by information on how to create characters needed for your campaigns. "The Traditions," "Magick" and "Permutations" are then outlined, as well as what you need to know when heading "Into the Umbra." The book wraps up with a detailed history of "The Technocracy" and its rise, as well as creatures that make up the world's "Bestiary." There are even steps to help you convert your favorite characters from other game systems over to this one. So, rise above it all and take part in *Mage: The Ascension*.

**Rebellious Insights:** If *Rebel Assault* lovers don't know where to go, then how a trip through the road to knowledge? New from Prima Publishing is *Rebel Assault: The Official Insider's Guide* (\$19.95), a 112-page book designed to help you with all versions of LucasArts' amazingly popular game. The tome walks the reader through the LucasArts game studio, detailing the development of the game and providing original artwork from the *Star Wars* films which inspired it. And, of course, there's the main reason why *Rebel Assault* fans will get a kick out of the book—all tips and tricks for the PC, Macintosh and Sega CD versions of the game are revealed! When you've got this book, who needs the Force?

—Michael McAvennie



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# AUDIOLOG

## MORE SF-TV SCORES

**A** Future to This Life: *RoboCop: The Series Soundtrack*, the purported album of music to the now-cancelled TV series, has finally materialized in the stores, courtesy of Pyramid Records (R2 71888). Included is the Joe Walsh duet with Lita Ford that became the end title song in the season's latter half. A skimpy two-minute suite of music from the Kevin Gillis/John Stroll underscore rounds out what qualifies as the soundtrack portion of this product. Most of the album, however, contains songs which apparently weren't used in any of the episodes. These selections, from "In-a-Gadda-da-Vida" by Iron Butterfly to KC & the Sunshine Band's "Shake Your Booty" are incredibly odd choices for the automaton peace officer. Why isn't Tipper Gore lobbying Congress for proper labeling of soundtrack albums?

A more legitimate song compilation is the music from Saban's *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* (Saban 2522001). Besides two versions of the main theme "Go Go Power Rangers," there are 10 more tunes from various episodes, usually heard under all the sound effects in the battle scenes. Expect another album tied into the forthcoming theatrical film.

Laurie Johnson's music from *First Men in the Moon*, *Dr. Strangelove* and *Captain Kronos*, *Vampire Hunter* has been re-issued by Varese Sarabande on *The Avengers* (VSD-5501). This collection of themes from both the original 1960s TV series and the '70s revival was originally released on CD (VCD47270) several years ago by Varese with all the film suites. Originally, they were first presented on two vinyl releases in the early 1980s that were co-produced by STARLOG's Kerry O'Quinn. *The Avengers* was the "A" side of a 1982 record (SV-95003), paired with another Johnson-scored British series, *The Professionals* (rarely seen here). Released two years earlier, *First Men in the Moon* (SV-95002) is presented in its complete form.

**Scoring Alternatives:** Graeme Revell scored big last year in the genre with his dynamic music for *The Crow* (VSD-5499) and *No Escape* (VSD-5483). Despite the highly marketed song albums tied into many of his films, Revell's music wasn't forgotten, thanks to Varese, who saw the value in marketing a second disc. Following the release of another song compilation, Varese picked up the ball and ran with Revell's exciting and lavish orchestral score to *Street Fighter* (VSD-5560). Filled with some stirring action cues and several themes to represent the various ethnic backgrounds of the film's characters, this score is one of the most diverse soundtracks in a long time.

**Creepy Sounds:** Elliot Goldenthal, whose upcoming *Batman Forever* score is being anxiously awaited, took Hollywood by storm last fall when he stepped in and

replaced the original music for *Interview With the Vampire* in only three weeks! On a weekend edition of the TV newsmagazine *Extra*, Goldenthal told how the time crunch was so tight that he would be writing at 4 a.m. and in the studio recording barely six hours later! To produce such great, Oscar-nominated work in a short time is a talent that Hollywood values very highly, so expect more Goldenthal work in the future. His *Vampire* music is available on Geffen Records (GEFD 24719) and another recent, non-genre score, *Cobb*, can be found on the Sony label (66923).

Director/composer John Carpenter and musical partner Jim Lang have whipped up another dark synthesizer score for Carpenter's latest magnum opus, *In the Mouth of Madness* (DRG Records 12611). Meanwhile, none of Ed Shearmur's score to *Tales from*

science-fiction cop thriller *The Hidden*, has a distinct knack of turning even the simplest score into a fabulous symphonic work.

Bruce Broughton, who composed *The Ice Pirates* and *The Boy Who Could Fly*, didn't fare as well on the soundtrack album to *Miracle on 34th Street* (Fox 07822-11022-2). Only about seven minutes of his music made it onto this song compilation, and no companion album of only the underscore is likely, since the film performed so poorly at the box office. Broughton can find some solace in the honor that will be bestowed upon him at Finland's Oulu Film Festival this month.

**Animated FX:** Now you can get all those "Boi-EE-oings," "Ba-AA-be-OO-OOs" and "Pingitty-Pingitty-Pings" you dream about endlessly with the release of *Hanna-Barbera Cartoon Sound FX* (Rhino R2 71827). This collection of 100 popular effects from *The*



Laurie Johnson provides music to watch apocalypses by in *Dr. Strangelove on The Avengers* CD. It also includes *First Men in the Moon*.

*the Crypt Presents Demon Knight* appears on the Atlantic song album (8275-2).

Leslie Bricusse, co-lyricist of the *Goldfinger* title theme, wrote songs with composer Frank Wildhorn for the London stage musical *Jekyll and Hyde*, based on Robert Louis Stevenson's classic story. Atlantic Records has released the complete play on a two-disc set (82723-2).

**Reissues:** Jerry Goldsmith's long out-of-print CD to *The Secret of N.I.M.H.* (VSD 551) has been brought out again on Varese's new budget line, where most discs are \$3 to \$4 less than current titles.

Paramount's *Star Trek: The Astral Symphony* (12958), their compilation of tracks from the first five film scores, is again in stores. Cliff Eidelman, composer of *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*, produced the album, which features 16 of the best themes.

**Christmas in Springtime:** In the better-late-than-never category comes Milan's belated release of Michael Convertino's score to 1994's big holiday fantasy, *The Santa Clause* (73138-35713-2). The composer, whose previous genre work was the 1987

*Flintstones*, *The Jetsons* and countless animated shorts contains everything from the Jetsons' car to Fred's bowling sounds. Henry Corden, the current voice of Fred, and Earl Kress perform various characters from the Hanna-Barbera stable on several specially recorded answering machine and birthday messages. Rhino promises more volumes to follow in the future. Yabba-dabba-doo!

**Imports:** Die-hard fans of Japan's top TV superhero *Ultraman* are probably the only ones who'll find something of interest in Apollon Records' collection (APCM-5048) of 20 songs from the various incarnations. The main title from the first series (which aired in the U.S. in the mid-1960s) is definitely on this album (track 8), but not the themes from the recently screened *Ultra 7* and *Ultraman: Towards the Future*. Sadly, the lyrics and all the liner notes are in Japanese, so you pay your money and take your chances with this one.

A selection of 20 songs culled from his late 1960s albums have been compiled on *Leonard Nimoy: "Highly Illogical"* from England's Rev-Ola Records (CREV017/

Dr. Strangelove Photo: Copyright 1963 Columbia Pictures

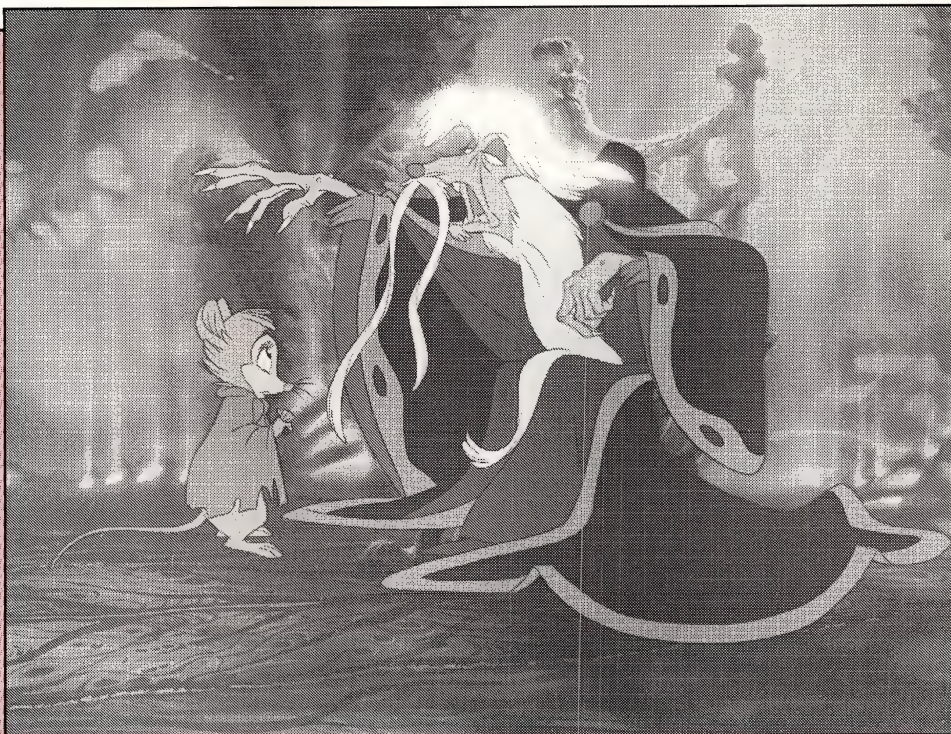


CD). None of the instrumental pieces (like the *Star Trek* theme) that appeared on Nimoy's first album are included on this edition, but that great cover of Mr. Spock holding the original two-foot *Enterprise* model is.

Ennio Morricone's score from the end-of-the-world thriller *Holocaust 2000* has been imported from Italy's Beat Records (CD CR 20), paired with the music from the film *Sesso in Confessionale*.

edel Records has released a compilation of all three *Highlander* scores on the new album *Highlander: The Final Dimension* (0028892EDL). Much of the original soundtrack music presented here has never been included on the previous releases. There is a 20-minute suite from Michael Kamen's score to the first film, 14 minutes of Stewart Copeland's second score and 28 minutes from J. Peter Robinson's music for the latest adventure. Koch International is importing the disc in the United States.

**Limited Editions:** Michael J. Lewis, whose film scores have been woefully absent from compact disc, has chosen to go the route taken by fellow Brit John Scott and personally release his own music for commercial sale. He has compiled the best from 14 scores on a stunning 117-minute, two-disc set which includes Vincent Price's *Theater of Blood*, the ESP thriller *The Medusa Touch*, HBO's



Art: Copyright 1982 United Artists Corp.

**Jerry Goldsmith's *Secret of N.I.M.H.* score is once again available.**

available from specialty shops and mail order services. The disc contains music from the 1979 telefilm *Vampire* as well as *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* and *Inside the Third Reich*.

Christopher Franke has released his music from *Babylon 5* on his own label, Sonic Images (SI 8402-2). This limited-edition pressing, signed and numbered by the composer, quickly sold out. It contained selections from the first season episodes "Chrysalis," "Mindwar" and "Parliament of Dreams" assembled into a three-part symphonic suite. The main title, though, was mixed into the first track in two sections. The package includes a lavishly illustrated booklet and jewel box.

John Alcantar, owner of Super Collector (1-800-99-SCI-FI), has told Audiolog that Franke will be reissuing the album with new packaging and eight additional minutes of music with will include the second season main title. Fans interested in Franke's other movie work should look for his *New Music for Films* album on Varese (VSD 5393).

Intimedia Music has scheduled for release three limited-edition albums based on the scores of John Massari. The first, *The Lost Music Soundtracks*, features extended versions of the composer's original music for the "Banshee" episode of *The Ray Bradbury Theater*. Also included is a long version of the main title theme and several unused cues. The other albums will feature Massari's music from Mike Jittlov's *The Wizard of Speed and Time* and the bizarre Chiodo Brothers fantasy *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*. The first album can be ordered for \$19.95 (shipping included) from Intimedia Music, P.O. Box 931493, Hollywood, CA 90093.

Laurence Rosenthal, Emmy Award-winning composer of *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*, has assembled a two-disc

promotional set (Windmere Music Publishers 42345) which includes music from *Meteor* (previously released on vinyl in Japan only), *The Island of Dr. Moreau* and *Clash of the Titans*. None of these titles have been released commercially on CD or are currently in print.

**Read More About It:** David Bell, who has scored several recent episodes of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, has written *Getting the Best Score for Your Film* with tips on selecting the appropriate musical style and composer. This \$12.95 paperback is published by Silman-James Press (ISBN 1-879505-20-7) and can be found in the Film & TV Reference section of larger bookstores.

**News & Notes:** Jerry Goldsmith is set to score the animated Clive Barker feature *The Thief of Always* from Frank Marshall and Kathleen Kennedy. Randy (Maverick) Newman is set for *Cats Don't Dance*, with voices by Scott Bakula and John (Raiders of the Lost Ark) Rhys-Davies.

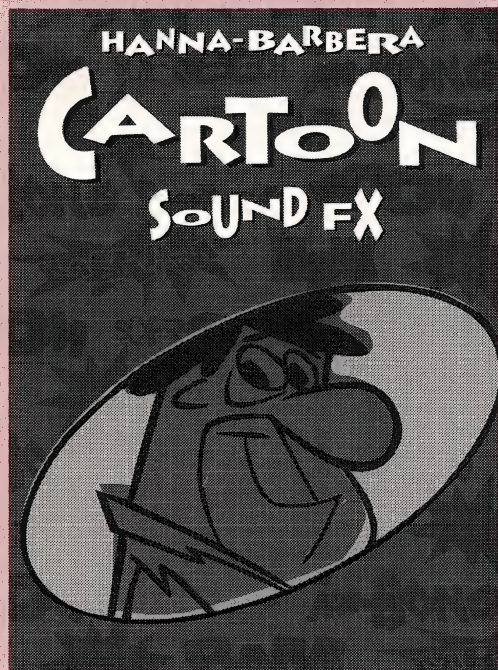
In the January 30th issue of *New York* magazine, Footlight Records reported that among the top-selling soundtrack albums in New York City, James Horner's *Legends of the Fall* was #2 and Dennis McCarthy's *Star Trek Generations* was #5.

Richard Allen Markowitz, composer of the theme for *The Wild, Wild West* and the score for *The Magic Sword*, died December 6, 1994 at age 68.

Alan Silvestri is set to score Sylvester Stallone's big-screen adaptation of *Judge Dredd*. David (Stargate) Arnold was replaced last winter in preference of Stallone favorite Jerry Goldsmith. That held until a scheduling conflict forced Goldsmith's exit.

Speaking of Silvestri, his 1986 score to Disney's *Flight of the Navigator* is also scheduled to be the first release from a new soundtrack CD label.

—David Hirsch



**Look for "Yabba-dabba-doo" and "Kaa-bongs" on the Hanna-Barbera Cartoon Sound FX release.**

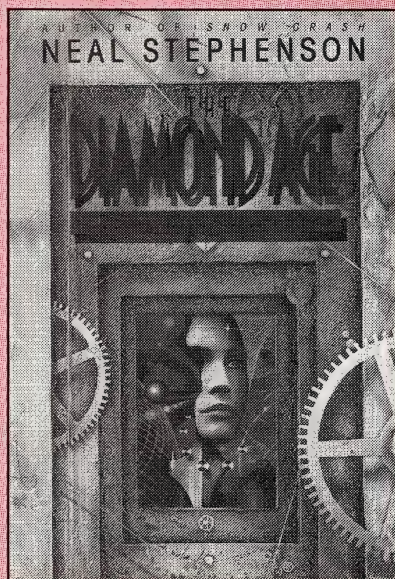
version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *ffolkes*, the Roger Moore action flick. Readers can purchase this set directly from the composer for \$29.95 (plus \$1.95 shipping) by writing to Pen Dinas Productions, 12525 Victory Boulevard, Suite 121, N. Hollywood, CA 91606.

Joining the do-it-yourself CD crowd, composer Fred Karlin of *Westworld* and *Man from Atlantis* fame, is launching his own series of albums. *The Fred Karlin Collection Volume 1* (Reel Music RMFK5701) is now



# BOOKLOG

Diamond Art: By & Copyright 1995 Bruce Jensen/Bantam



**The Diamond Age** by Neal Stephenson (Bantam/Spectra, hardcover, 455 pp, \$22.95)

Of all speculative technologies, nanotechnology holds the most promise—and threat—for revolutionizing existence. Neal Stephenson has realized that building things from atoms up isn't just for growing diamond rocket engines—it's for teaching the young.

In a future of competing tribes ranging from Victorian technocrats to orgiastic group minds, a little girl of the underclass comes to own a magic book, a powerful nanocomputer designed to provide its user with a superb education while inculcating her with individuality and strength. Guided by the book's stories and the loving voice of the anonymous narrator, Nell grows up amid revolution and conspiracy, and she might hold the key to greater upheavals.

The book isn't perfect. Emulating Victorian novels, Stephenson has created a huge cast, and some fascinating characters like Judge Fang and Constable Moore get lost in the action. Also, a major plot device, that this advanced world can't create artificial human voices, seems like mere contrivance.

Brilliant despite some flaws, *The Diamond Age* is a must read.

—Scott W. Schumack

**Arthur, King** by Dennis Lee Anderson (HarperPrism, paperback, 360 pp, \$4.99)

One moment King Arthur is lying near death, suffering wounds he received at the hands of Mordred. The next moment it's 1940 and Arthur is bailing out of a crashing Spitfire over an England preparing for "its finest hour."

Moving King Arthur from his familiar milieu to another time has been an occasional pastime within the genre. The problem with setting the story in World War II, though, is that everyone knows how it'll come out on

the broad scale. People are also familiar enough with the Arthurian legend to guess the ending—presuming, of course, that the author doesn't plan any enormous liberties.

Dennis Lee Anderson doesn't take liberties with the legend or the history. He instead uses his uncomplicated style to concentrate on the sixth-century king trying to make his way through 20th-century England. It's good fun, and Anderson has done enough honest research to make the settings and the time as realistic as possible.

The only problem in the story is that Arthur manages to adapt too quickly to the new times, as well as the difficulties of becoming a fighter pilot. Merlin is even more of a *deus ex machina* than usual, and one wishes that Arthur could have suffered a few more pitfalls in the course of his quest and the exploration of his world. Other than this, though, *Arthur, King* is a smooth read.

—Michael Wolff

**Georgia on My Mind and Other Places** by Charles Sheffield (Tor, hardcover, 352 pp, \$21.95)

Charles Sheffield seems to thrive on all that makes SF fun to read. He's at the roots of the genre and doing well. Sheffield is literate, articulate, educated, worldly and quite at home in the short story form.

This new anthology is a rich and varied sampler of his work, and an excellent introduction for those who are unfamiliar with this award-winning author. Sheffield likes to write about places that are off the map. Stories like "Beyond the Golden Road," "Trapalanda" and the Nebula-winning title story continue this theme. He also likes to be off the map scientifically. Starting from solid science and research, stories proceed effortlessly to startling conclusions. Sense of wonder is Sheffield's stock in trade.

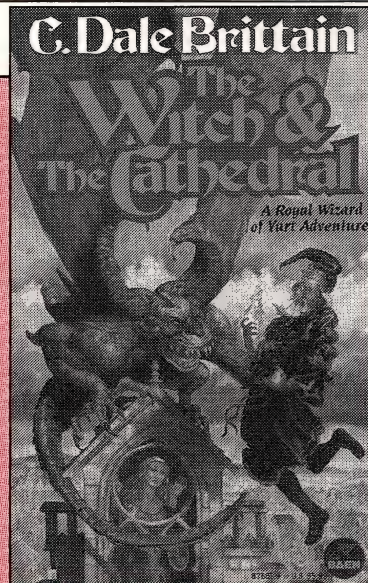
Humor and sleuthing are also part of the package. While the longer stories are of consistent quality, the shorter ones should be looked upon as comic (or cosmic) relief. Unlike wine tasting, there's no particular reason to read these stories in any special order. However, it might be well to cleanse your palate with "Obsolete Skill" before savoring "The Fifteenth Station of the Cross."

Whatever order you read the stories in, you're bound to be hooked. Sheffield's imagination knows no bounds, and you'll find yourself wondering where he'll take you next. Though much of his writing is in the traditions of classical SF, there are times, like in the title story, when he simply transcends, going from the roots of the genre to the tree tops and beyond.

—John Vester

**The Witch and the Cathedral** by C. Dale Brittain (Baen, paperback, 343 pp, \$5.99)

Helping a friend discover who's using magic and monsters to delay the construction of the new cathedral is just the excuse Daimbert needs to flee the royal court of Yurt. His beloved queen is remarrying and the heartbroken wizard is having trouble accepting it. He soon has more important concerns.



Witch Art: Baen Books

A renegade wizard is on the loose, and someone is trying to set wizards, the Church and the aristocracy against one another. Then, there's the witch who has caught Daimbert's eye. Is she friend or foe?

C. Dale Brittain writes a tale full of twists and turns. Seeing through the slightly paranoid eyes of Daimbert, it's easy to suspect all the characters. Despite the intrigue, the plot isn't difficult to follow—though not without surprises.

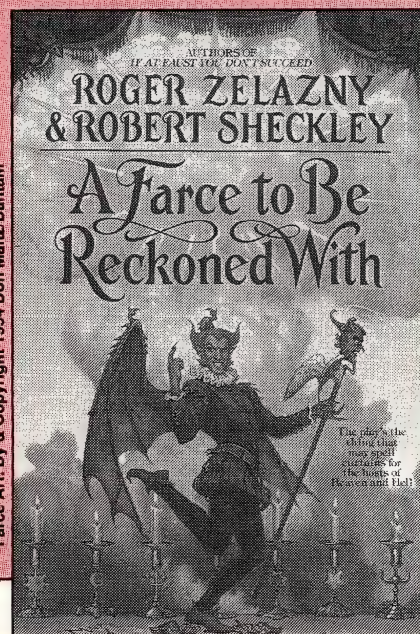
The romance is nicely handled. And, there are also some nice comic touches, as well as some anxious moments during the magic battles.

—Penny L. Kenny

**A Farce to Be Reckoned With** by Roger Zelazny & Robert Sheckley (Bantam/Spectra, trade paperback, 304 pp, \$12.95)

The wily demon Azzie Elbub is back in this third, but self-contained, installment of Roger Zelazny and Robert Sheckley's series of light-humored fantasies, which began with *Bring Me the Head of Prince Charming* and *If at Faust You Don't Succeed*.

Here, Azzie plans to stage an immorality play, intended to demonstrate that the seven deadly sins are nothing but the path to happiness, and that man can live any old way, without worrying about fate. However, the play unleashes forces which challenge the cosmic



Farce Art: By & Copyright 1994 Don Maitz/Bantam



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status quo and the very existence of Good and Evil.

Zelazny and Sheckley are old masters at this type of material. One is, at times, reminded of Gordon R. Dickson's *Dragon and the George* series, of Piers Anthony's early *Xanth* volumes or of L. Sprague de Camp's *Goblin Tower* novels, but with defter, lighter touches of satire. By this third volume, the authors are also in better control of their mythos—or have taken more time to figure it out—and consequently, the plot is tighter and more focused. All in all, a good, frolicking read.

—Jean-Marc Lofficier

**Humility Garden: An Unfinished Biography** by Felicity Savage (Roc, paperback, 352 pp, \$4.99)

Humility belies the humbleness and peacefulness of her name. She arrives in the city with no real plans, and in three years rises to become a master "ghostier"—a killer who poses and paints her victims' spirits to make them objects of art.

As she rises, she becomes a god's lover, assumes political power, is targeted for death by mortals and gods alike, and (since this is the first book of a pair) is left in danger at the end.

Felicity Savage has launched an ambitious project with this first novel, and in general, handles the story well. Some character developments are somewhat unbelievable; the motivations aren't readily apparent, but those are mainly confined to minor characters.

The book is about politics and how they affect relationships. Fortunately, Savage sets up a relationship between Humility and the God Arity that readers will care about.

—Penny L. Kenny

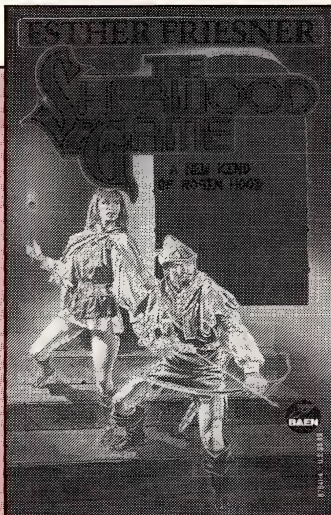
**Archangel** by Mike Conner (Tor, hardcover, 350 pp, \$21.95)

In a stylish blending of genres, Mike Conner has brought *film noir* to alternative history in this gripping re-creation of post-World War I Minnesota. The vector that sends history off in Conner's new direction is a plague brought on by German germ warfare gone awry in the trenches in France. German hemorrhagic fever ("Hun" for short) decimates the world and completely alters the relationship between the races.

This is a story about people caught in cataclysm. Almost as frightening as the slow unraveling of civilization is the desperate retreat of the individuals in the face of death and dissolution. The ultimate question the novel examines is whether things can ever get so bad that basic morality becomes irrelevant. In the gallant struggle of Conner's characters to resist the rule of pragmatism and preserve the rule of law, there's a lesson for us all as we teeter on the thin edge of civilization ourselves.

*Archangel* will be many things to many readers—detective story, romance, social commentary, medical mystery or Gothic horror—but first and foremost, it is good reading.

—John Vester



Sherwood Art: Clyde Caldwell/Baen Books

**The Sherwood Game** by Esther Friesner (Baen, paperback, 384 pp, \$5.99)

This seriocomic SF novel is more annoying than amusing. Repressed programming wizard Carl Sherwood finds the elaborate virtual reality game he created on his employer's computer system getting out of hand. First, his hero, Robin Hood, *accidentally* becomes sentient. Second, Robin and other digital characters start entering the real world when their programs are downloaded into humanoid robots, an implausible idea that implies far more advanced technology than the rest of the book. Carl whines and shouts, Robin smirks and the action is predictable.

Things improve in the second half with the introduction of intriguing issues like the responsibility of artists for—and to—their creations, and the exploitation of artificial beings. Unfortunately, none of this is addressed in any depth, and it's hard to take the novel's stance against the exploitation of simulated children seriously when its climactic battle features the mass slaughter of simulated spear carriers—all in fun, of course.

—Scott W. Schumack

**Gun, with Occasional Music** by Jonathan Lethem (Tor, trade paperback, 262 pp, \$10.95)

Adventurous readers should like Jonathan Lethem's deft mix of Philip K. Dick and Raymond Chandler, for by projecting the private-eye milieu of femme fatales, gunsels and corrupt cops into a drug-soaked future of evolution therapy and cryogenic prisons, he creates something funny, gripping and disturbing. For instance, world-weary private inquisitor Conrad Metcalf pines for a lost love, of course, but she didn't break his heart—she stole his *nerve endings*. Lethem never explains how karmic points and talking animals came about, or why childhood is obsolete and questions are immoral, and the effect is unsettling.

The book's parody of first-person narration and hardboiled prose is funny, but Lethem's aim is serious. Here the concerns of the classic detective story—truth, lies, guilt, innocence, trust and manipulation—are meaningless, and "whodunit" isn't as important as what drugs they were on when it happened. Metcalf wades through blood, deception and treachery like any good

shamus, but his final victory is a bitter act of despair and nihilism possible only in SF.

—Scott W. Schumack

**Silverhand** by Morgan Llywelyn and Michael Scott (Baen, hardcover, 480 pp, \$22)

Chaos spawned from the perverse desires of twin rulers engulfs the realm, and the child of prophecy who will restore order appears.

Caeled Silverhand is an orphan destined to find the four hidden objects of power—the Arcana—and wield them against the Duet. Helping him are a stone warrior woman, a beautiful vampire and a werebeast.

The book's first half is all set-up—introducing Caeled and getting him ready for his quest. It's fast, fascinating reading. Once Caeled starts his destined course, it really kicks into gear as he moves from one battle to another. The actual finding of two Arcana is anti-climactic, though their later use makes up for that.

Caeled and the stone woman Gwynne are the most fleshed-out characters (so to speak). The rest of the cast needs more rounding out in the sequel. There's also a mystery surrounding one of the bad guys that's just begging to be revealed.

—Penny L. Kenny

**Fire in the Sky** by Jo Clayton (DAW, paperback, 352 pp, \$5.99)

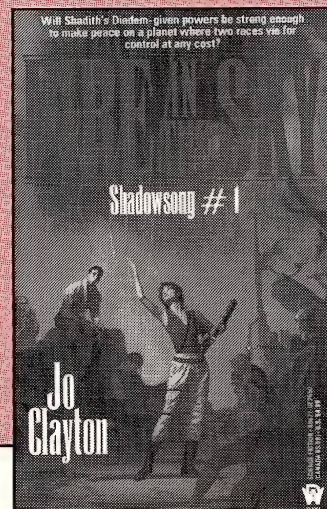
Two ruthless corporations battle for control of a planet's resources, destroying its inhabitants in the process. A brave woman risks her life to get the truth of what's happening to the authorities, while natives act on their own to rid themselves of the invaders.

Jo Clayton jumps into the story immediately and keeps a fevered pace all the way through. Informational bits are dropped throughout the book about the society, culture, characters, etc. It's up to readers to put them together. More explanation of some terms might have been in order.

Clayton uses the viewpoints of many characters; most aren't around long enough to gain reader sympathy. Other characters returned to lack the fullness of heroine Shadith and native Ilaörn.

Shadith is the star, but Ilaörn is just as interesting. A broken prisoner, his choices (or non-choices) are fascinating and ultimately heart-breaking reading.

—Penny L. Kenny

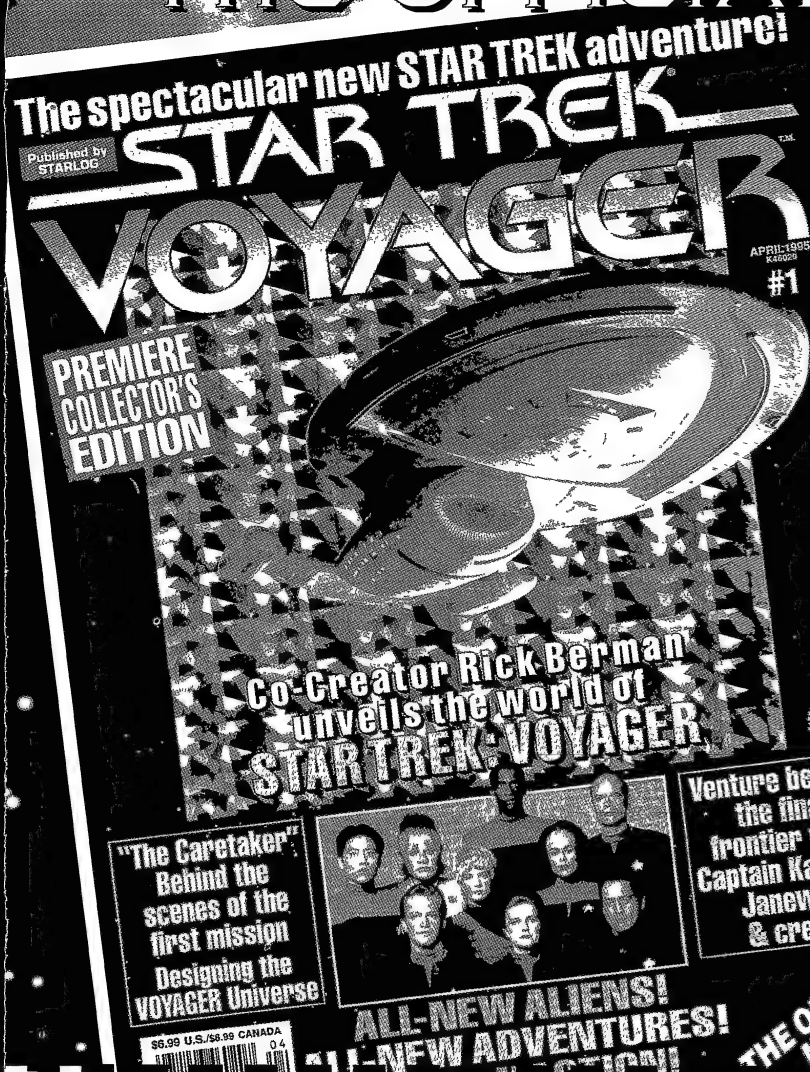


Fire Art: DAW Books



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# FANLOG

## SF DIRECTORY Assembled by MICHAEL STEWART

Please note: Inclusion here does not indicate endorsement of any club or publication by STARLOG. And STARLOG is *not* responsible for information and spelling errors or changes in fees. Always write *first* to any organization, including a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) to confirm its continued existence.

Attention: Not listed here? It is not our oversight. You haven't sent information to us. Note: This is now a *one-time-only* (per year) listing. Please write to SF Directory, STARLOG, 475 Park Avenue South, NY, NY 10016. Provide *all* pertinent info on club/publication type, sanctioning (complete with a photocopy of the letter sanctioning the club's existence from the sanctioning party), mailing address, phone number (*mandatory*), yearly dues or subscription rates and membership kit. To facilitate inclusion, please provide info in the style that follows, carefully typed double-space. These will be listed free at STARLOG's discretion. Please note: STARLOG accepts absolutely *NO* phone calls re: fan clubs for any reason.

### FAN CLUBS & PUBLICATIONS

#### FEDERATION ADHERENTS

A club for fans of *Star Trek*.

**Sanctioning:** None.

**Address:** Federation Adherents  
755 Stevens Street #50  
Medford, OR 97504

**Dues:** \$10.

**Membership Includes:** Newsletter, ID card.

#### WARP 9

A group celebrating all aspects of SF.

**Sanctioning:** None.

**Address:** Chris Chartier  
Warp 9  
P.O. Box 311  
Station B  
Montreal, Quebec  
H3B 3J7  
Canada

**Dues:** \$18 per year (Canada, U.S.), \$35 (elsewhere).

**Membership Includes:** Four to eight issues of *Sub-Space* and *Warp Factor*, membership card, bi-monthly meetings. Sample issue \$4.

#### HIGH COUNCIL OF GALLIFREY

A club dedicated to the celebration of the TV series *Dr. Who*.

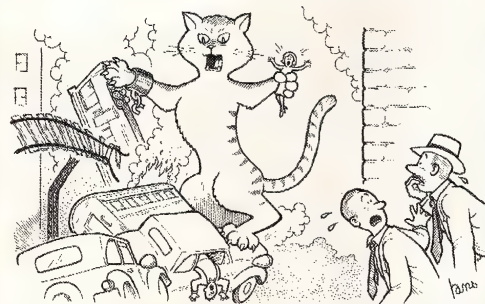
**Sanctioning:** None.

**Address:** Jennifer Brown  
HCOG  
P.O. Box 311  
Station B  
Montreal, Quebec  
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Canada

**Dues:** \$10 per year for U.S. and Canada; write for overseas rates.

**Membership Includes:** Four issues of the *Foreman Report*, membership card and bi-monthly/monthly meetings. Sample issue: \$4.

Art: David Hanson



"Didn't I tell you it was a bad idea to put Carl Denham in charge of this year's cat show?!"

#### TRUSTNO1

A club for fans of *The X-Files*.

**Sanctioning:** None.

**Address:** TRUSTNO1  
c/o Gale Dumont  
111 Gardenia Street  
Tavernier, FL 33070

**Dues & Membership:** Send SASE for further info.

#### WOLFSHEAD

A *Robin of Sherwood* letterzine/newsletter.

**Sanctioning:** None.

**Address:** 75 Melville Street  
Abington, Northampton  
NN1 4HX  
England

**Subscription Rates:** £16 (U.K.), \$30 (U.S.).

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#### MAY MARCON 30

May 5-7  
Hyatt Regency  
Columbus, OH  
Marcon 30  
P.O. Box 141414  
Columbus, OH 43214  
(614) 451-3154  
70004.760@Compuserve.com  
Guests: Katherine Kurtz, Ray Harryhausen, Forrest J Ackerman, Spider & Jeanne Robinson

#### FANGORIA'S WEEKEND OF HORRORS

May 6-7  
LAX Sheraton  
Los Angeles, CA  
Creation Entertainment  
411 N. Central Avenue, Suite 300  
Glendale, CA 91203  
(818) 409-0960  
Guests: Heather Langenkamp, John Saxon, Brad Dourif

#### MOSI STAR TREK CON

May 13-14  
Museum of Science and Industry  
Tampa, FL  
Museum of Science and Industry  
4801 East Fowler Avenue  
Tampa, FL 33617-2099  
Guest: James Doohan

#### GAYLAXICON VI

May 19-21  
Radisson Hotel  
Niagara Falls, NY  
The Gaylactic Network  
P.O. Box 127  
Brookline, MA 02146  
(301) 604-1763

#### ROC\*CON 19

May 19-21  
Excelsior Hotel and Statehouse  
Convention Center  
Little Rock, AR  
Roc\*Con  
P.O. Box 24285  
Little Rock, AR 72221  
(501) 776-1146  
Guest: Harry Tuttledevo

#### STARPARTY ASHLAND

May 20  
Mark Antony Hotel  
Ashland, OR  
Starparty Productions  
11918 SE Division, Suite 264  
Portland, OR 97226  
(503) 760-4085  
Guests: Robin Curtis, Grace Lee Whitney

#### TOY SHOW

May 21  
John A. Oremus Community  
Center

Bridgeview, IL  
Terry Mannix  
10220 S. Ridgeland Avenue  
Apt. A6  
Chicago Ridge, IL 60415  
(708) 425-7851

#### ECLIPSE

May 26-28  
Holiday Inn Expo Center  
Columbia, MO  
Eclipse 95  
c/o The Cheshire Cat  
27 N. 10th  
Columbia, MO 65201  
Guest: Margaret Weis

#### TREK TIME

May 26-28  
Innisbrook Hilton  
Palm Harbor, FL  
Trek Time  
1-800-477-TREK  
Guest: John de Lancie

#### WISCON 19

May 26-29  
Concourse Hotel  
Madison, WI  
WisCon  
P.O. Box 1624  
Madison, WI 53701-1624  
(608) 256-4603  
Guests: Sharyn McCrumb, Barbara Hambly

#### GAMECAUCUS II

May 26-29  
Oakland Airport Hotel  
Oakland, CA  
Mike Wilson  
TriGaming Associates  
P.O. Box 27634  
Concord, CA 94527-0634  
(510) 686-9319

#### LEGENDS COLLECTORS

May 27

Huntsville Hilton  
Huntsville, AL  
Legends Conventions  
514 Broad Street  
Rome, GA 30161  
(706) 234-8210

#### ALBION

May 27-28  
Northampton Moat House  
Northampton, England  
Kevin Waters  
14 Judith Road  
Kettering, Northants  
NN16 0NX  
England

#### JUNE MOBI-CON '95

June 9-11  
Holiday Inn Downtown  
Mobile, AL  
Mobi-Con  
P.O. Box 161257  
Mobile, AL 36616  
Guest: Margaret Weis

#### ARCHON 19

June 23-25  
The Gateway Center  
Collinsville, IL  
St. Louis Science Fiction Ltd.  
P.O. Box 483  
Chesterfield, MO 63006-0483  
sffen@aol.com  
Guests: A.E. van Vogt, Jack Williamson

#### FEDERATION CON III

June 30-July 2  
Munich Sheraton  
Munich, Germany  
Monika Schoemann  
Schoepplerstr. 24  
Augsburg D-86154  
Germany  
Guests: Brent Spiner, Jonathan Frakes

#### JULY LEGENDS COLLECTORS

June 3-4  
Lakeshore Mall  
Gainesville, GA  
Legends Conventions  
514 Broad Street  
Rome, GA 30161  
(706) 234-8210

#### CONJURATION VI

July 7-9  
Adam's Mark Hotel  
Tulsa, OK  
Conjuration VI  
P.O. Box 692024  
Tulsa, OK 74169-2024  
Guests: Tom Savini, Glen Cook, Edward Bryant

#### A DISTANT SHORE

July 7-9  
Doubletree Hotel  
Los Angeles, CA  
Carousels & Caverns Community  
P.O. Box 9287  
Anaheim, CA 92812  
(714) 520-3232  
Guests: Armin Shimerman, Roy Dotrice, Ellen Geer, Tony Jay, David Greenlee, Jay Acovone, Howard Gordon

#### NJ SF & COMICS CON

July 9  
Holiday Inn  
Tinton Falls, NJ  
L.S.C.C.  
11 Eisele Avenue  
Wanamassa, NJ 07712  
(908) 531-9281

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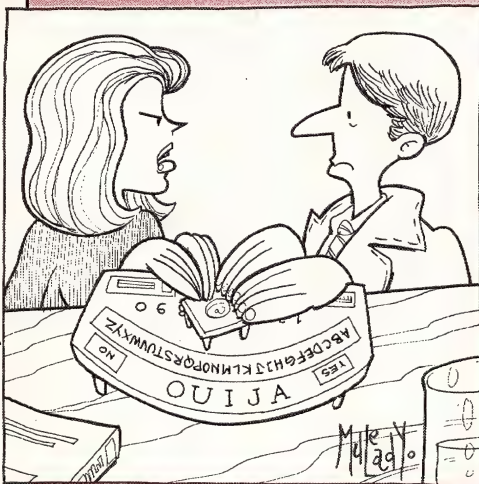
## SEND IN THE CLONE

...When I read the interview with Jerry Hardin (#211), I realized that it was time one of our local pet theories on what's really going on in *The X-Files* universe got out onto the street. It has been a part of our theoretical framework for the show for so long I was actually surprised to see that the possibility hadn't occurred to anybody connected with the show. Yet it's absolutely the perfect method of bringing Deep Throat back, if they ever decide they wish to do so.

At the end of our first viewing of "Eve," my husband Damon said, "I wonder what happened to the Adams. We never even saw a picture of them."

"Died, I guess," I said. But that sounded unlikely, with three whole Eves left. "You reckon maybe Deep Throat is one?"

Damon frowned. "He might be too old."



"I DIDN'T MOVE IT, MULDER! YOU DID!!"

But the more we thought about this idea, the better we liked it! Much later, Damon suggested that Deep Throat might be, not one Adam, but two—accounting for some contradictions in his behavior and his overarching knowledge of the various conspiracies. The Eve clones are emotionally dependent on each other, but it may be that the Adams (due to exaggerated testosterone levels or whatever) are extremely competitive, so that it's not even out of bounds to wonder whether a "bad" Deep Throat set the "good" Deep Throat up to be assassinated! Or a surviving Adam may re-surface as he pursues the more traditional "revenge for brother's death" storyline.

The theory has several advantages as a device to bring back the character. First, it is an extremely flexible one, and can be used as a springboard for

a number of different plots. Second, it uses established story elements from early in the series, so that it would not look hastily cobbled together as so many "return from death" plots do. Third, it would maintain the sanctity and impact of death, which frequent physical resurrections tend to cheapen of its dramatic effect. I don't know about the rest of you, but it hacks me off when someone who has been pronounced dead by a competent doctor (like the enigmatic Dr. Scully!) and turned over to the mortuary suddenly reappears *in propria persona*.

Deep Throat could also come back as a ghost; but if he has to reappear in the program as a physical person with an ongoing life, I really think the Adam shtick is the only way to go!

Peni R. Griffin  
1123 W. Magnolia Avenue  
San Antonio, TX 78201

## POSTCARDS FROM EARTH 2

...I've long been a *Star Trek*, and consequently a science fiction fan, however, I've felt that the science fiction media was becoming too entranced with and dependent upon the worlds created by Gene Roddenberry and George Lucas. At times, creativity and imagination seemed overshadowed and stifled by the perpetuation of these two icons. It is refreshing to see originality alive again in a whole new realm—*Earth 2*.

What I find most enjoyable about *Earth 2* is why I found the original *Star Trek* episodes so alluring—neither depend strongly on hi-tech or visual enhancements. The actions of the characters in dealing with conflicts they encounter are the main concerns of the programs. *Earth 2* has gadgets and technology and unique creatures, but human nature and survival are the central features of the show. As Gene Roddenberry tried to demonstrate through the personas of Spock and Data, who were both intrigued and at times appalled by human nature, it is in our inner conflicts and the course our personal beliefs lead us to choose that makes us each so unique.

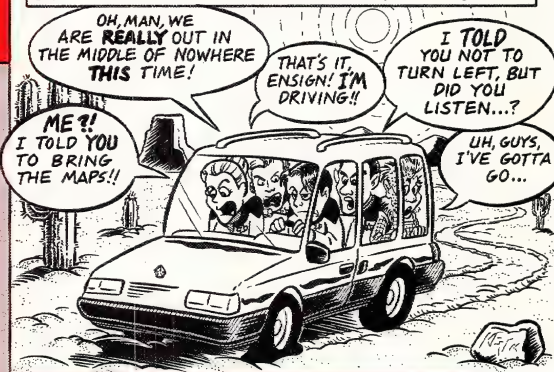
On *Earth 2*, not all of the characters are completely good, nor are they completely bad. None are superheroes fighting their way through the galaxy unscathed. They are simply ordinary humans placed in extraordinary circumstances, where some prove to be leaders, others followers and a few, at times, problem causers. They are humans searching for a better way to get along together and trying to survive. How they each react to an incident is as interesting as the incident itself. How they treat their new world and deal with its natives may prove enlightening.

The show has a very strong, multi-talented cast. Jessica Steen, John Gegenhuber and Sullivan Walker are wonderful in their roles. Clancy Brown, a veteran actor of close to two dozen movies, continues to display his outstanding talents, and it is nice to see him breaking out of his villain roles to portray a caring, sensitive, yet rebellious leader. When he was in Kansas City last November, Brown stated that he hopes the audience will give *Earth 2* a chance to work out some rough edges and to develop into the outstanding show it has the potential to become.

The freshness of the show, talents of the main actors and guest stars and the enjoyable newly created characters and universe hold much hope of a fun, new and exciting adventure.

Debra Sims  
2120 Arrowhead Circle  
Olathe, KS 66062

**BEFORE THEIR CURRENT SITUATION, THE CREW OF THE VOYAGER GOT STRANDED IN ANOTHER VOYAGER...**



Art: Kevin Brockschmidt

...I'm writing to tell you my views of *Earth 2*. I think it's a great show with a lot of potential. I enjoyed your recent articles on Debra Farentino (#211) and John Gegenhuber (#212). Farentino is a fine actress, who plays her character with a great deal of passion and depth.

*Earth 2* really is a "wagon train in the stars," it is a very interesting show and has quickly become a jewel in the SF universe. The beautiful, scenic visuals of New Mexico, and stunning special FX are Emmy worthy. But, it's the writing that puts *Earth 2* over the top, making it a can't-miss show for any SF fan. Michael Duggan, Carol Flint and Mark Levin, the executive producers of *Earth 2*, have done a great job in developing a unique show with a super cast. The chemistry among the cast is very entertaining, and they seem to be coalescing more every week. Aside from Farentino, I really enjoy Clancy Brown and Sullivan Walker in their roles as Danziger and Yale.

My favorite cast member is Jessica Steen, who plays Dr. Julia Heller; her portrayal of the traitorous Council spy has been fantastic. It is truly a testament to her acting skill to create a character such as Heller, who is very sympathetic while still engaged in espionage. Steen's performance was one of a good person just working for the wrong people. She showed someone with very split loyalties attempting to do right by both groups. I know the firestorm of criticism this will cause, but I believe that *Earth 2* is better than *Deep Space Nine*. At least in the focus of the show and the direction it is trying to reach.

As you can tell, I hope *Earth 2* will be around for the foreseeable future. I would urge all of you who enjoy *Earth 2* to write NBC and tell them you watch. If the unthinkable did happen, and *Earth 2* was not renewed, I would urge first-run syndica-



Art: Mike Wright



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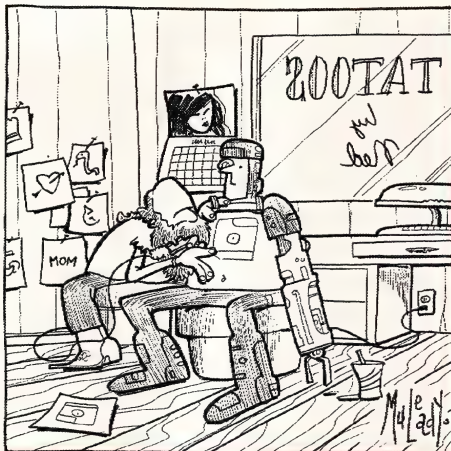
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Magnum Opus Con - 10/WAR '95  
PO Box 6585 Athens, GA. 30604

Art: Bob Muleady



BORG TATTOOS.

tion. Although I am a longtime SF fan, I am new to your fine magazine and hope to continue enjoying it in the future.

Joseph B. Williford  
205 S. Claiborne Street  
Goldsboro, NC 27530

## KIRK, STILL DEAD?

...While Editor David McDonnell has some valid points in his Liner Notes (STARLOG #211) concerning the demise of Captain Kirk, there are some areas that he fails to take into account. This world of "adventure" that fans seek in books, TV, music, whatever, means something to them. Granted, it's not "real" in the absolute sense of the word. But, it's that part of them that would like to go on these adventures, see other worlds or fight fantastic enemies if those possibilities were available. For some strange reason, these characters and worlds became part of our lives, and that's why it's so hard for some of us to let go. They're something we believe in, regardless if those things deserve that adulation.

When *Star Trek* premiered, I was only three years old. After watching *Generations*, I found myself thinking someone who was part of my life (real or otherwise) was gone. Not just the character, but the icon. It wasn't a comforting feeling.

Granted, the idea of having a wake for Kirk seems silly, but some people must remember that the idea of Captain Kirk means something to fans. Just ask any "Virginia" if Santa Claus is real and you might find yourself with dozens of possible but equally valid answers.

As for McDonnell's 10 points, they only serve to remind us how death is treated in popular culture. In other words, not very well.

It's amazing what effect popular culture has on us, whether we want it to or not.

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## SUBMARINE VIEWS

...I've watched *seaQuest* since 1993, to the point that my friends say I have it down to a science, and I'm not about to quit watching now. I'm getting tired of people complaining about the show's new characters and direction. At first, I had the "but it just isn't *seaQuest*" syndrome, and I didn't like any of the new people or the new angle the storylines took. I was upset that Stephanie Beacham, John D'Aquino, Stacey Haiduk and Royce D. Applegate left, but after I started enjoying the new characters for what they were instead of comparing them to what they had last year, I found that I actually like what they've done. It would have been nice if everyone we were used to would have continued on, but the new cast members have brought their own qualities to the show, even if they are different.

I was hoping to see Captain Bridger and Dr. Westphalen develop something a little more intimate than their on/off love interest. True, Rosalind Allen isn't the same kind of Roy Scheider equivalent when it comes to screen presence that Beacham is, and Allen has a much quieter disposition. Her character and style aren't what Westphalen's was, but Wendy Smith, being a telepath, can be many things Westphalen could not; where Westphalen has powerful determination, Smith, who has her own strength and determination, is a softer, less extreme woman. It provides contrast to *seaQuest*'s arduous military atmosphere.

While I didn't agree with the "no one over 35" or the "younger and sexier" approach that exiled D'Aquino and Applegate, thinking that Brody, Piccolo and Dagwood couldn't replace Krieg and Crocker (even if they can't—and shouldn't—I really don't think they were supposed to "replace" them) just kept me from enjoying the imaginative new additions. As it was with the two doctors, what was lost was made up for. Both of the DeLuise brothers are fantastic as their characters.

One of the best things I see happening this season that didn't last year is the development of the characters, both new and old. Quite a few of the episodes this year have focused on the personal adventures of individual crew members. They have looked into past relationships and families, told how-I-got-to-be-how-I-am-now stories and created backgrounds and histories. Those stories really only focused on Lucas and Nathan in the first season, whereas this year everyone is included. It's great that we now get to learn about all of the characters instead of just watching them do what they do. Now we get to see *who* they are and *why* they do it. That makes them far more interesting and likable than stick figures on the screen. Sometimes, last year, I really felt that Darwin had more of a personality than some of the humans (i.e. Ortiz and O'Neill). I loved Krieg, but I only knew what he did, I didn't know what made him do it. As a fan, I like to know everything about my favorite show's characters—their personalities as well as their history. That kind of stuff is included this time around.

We're exploring future romances. That didn't happen much last year. We never learned much about the Hitchcock/Krieg marriage, nor did we see any love interests or deep kinships form between people besides Lucas, Bridger and Westphalen until later episodes. This year, we see relationships. The episode "Vapors," which I like to call "the *Love Boat* episode," was particularly strong in that sense.



Art: Dwain Meyer

"I told you to slow down and chew your food!"



There was one letter I read in STARLOG in which the writer didn't like the long "philosophical speeches" made on the show. Actions on television can be interpreted in so many ways that it's sometimes necessary to explain them through things like "philosophical speeches." The mistake that writers made in *seaQuest* was, I think, *overdoing* the explanations instead of letting actions, the choice of informal (non-speech dialogue) words, and the tone speak for themselves. As we understand the characters more, the speeches will be less frequent.

When *seaQuest* moved its operations to Florida, many of its first-season troubles were addressed and corrected. Improvements were made. And though it is different from what it was in 1993, it finally knows *what* it is. Science fiction. I'm anticipating her to sail again in 1996, and maybe she'll have a new crew then, too, but as long as *seaQuest* is on the air (and in the water), you know where I'll be on Sunday nights.

Michele Raralio  
Address Withheld

### MORE DEEP THOUGHTS

...In response to Amber Pippin's letter in particular (STARLOG #211) and several others in general: As one who likes *Deep Space Nine*, I'll be happy to take it.

Why can't people argue a different point-of-view? Why should everyone in the whole *Trek* Universe get along? Remember how flat-out boring the early episodes of *The Next Generation* were? If anything, I believe it makes for stronger bonds between the characters, and makes the characters themselves stronger, when they earn the respect and friendship of those around them as time goes on. The relationships can then deepen and grow.

It's also fun to watch real interplay. The Kira/Dax scenes work much better than any one of the Troi/Crusher scenes, because the former relationship was given time to develop. Likewise, the Sisko/Kira scenes. In fact, all of the relationships are well realized.

Please don't get me wrong. I'm not suggesting one show is better than the other. I loved *TNG*, but *DS9* does what it's supposed to do. It makes a point while telling a good story. Can't get much truer to Gene Roddenberry's vision than that.

Keith Cable  
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...Why do the powers that be at *Deep Space Nine* feel the need to tease their audience just as those in charge of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* did for almost seven seasons?

From almost the very beginning of *The Next Generation*, the audience was toyed with as to the relationship between Doctor Crusher and Captain Picard. Long before an article appeared in STARLOG to confirm my theory, I was well aware of an unspoken romantic attraction between these characters. From the first season until the seventh season episode "Attached," each and every time Dr. Crusher was on the verge of revealing her feelings, usually in a "no way out" situation, something interrupted her. I found this to be extremely frustrating and manipulative.

Now, in its third season, *Deep Space Nine* has found a way to start this manipulation all over again. I had picked up on the fact that Odo was attracted to Kira during the episode "Meridian." This was prior to the more obvious hints at the beginning of "Fascination" and the scriptwriter's admission of this detail as conveyed in Mrs. Troi's dialogue near the end of this same episode. In fact, my observation was completely confirmed in the cover story on Rene Auberjonois and his role as Odo in DEEP SPACE NINE magazine #10.



THE TERRIBLE TWOS...

In the episode "Life Support," Vedek Bareil is killed off. This seemed to lay the groundwork for Odo to reveal his feelings to Kira. This is exactly what I was thinking as the trailer for the next episode, "Heart of Stone," was airing. Kira and Odo trapped on a planet. Kira in a life and death situation with Odo her only hope of survival and his devotion in saying he won't leave her. I thought that this would be a perfect opportunity for Odo to profess his love. It's a thought that was bolstered by the description in *TV Guide* and my local weekly TV books. These included "...surprising character revelation" in *TV Guide*. "A threat to Kira's life stirs buried emotions in Odo," in one local program guide. How much more evidence could have been proffered as to what would be revealed.

When "Heart of Stone" aired, for a couple of minutes I thought that my wish had been fulfilled. However, in the end, I was let down. Odo out and out says that he can't leave Kira there to die, even at risk to his own life, because he is in love with her. She responds that she is in love with him too and furthermore, this feeling has existed for quite a while. This should have been my first indication that something wasn't what it seemed to be. After all, it was very clear that Kira was in love with Bareil until his recent demise. Very shortly thereafter I found out what *TV Guide* meant when they had said this episode had a "clever plot twist." Kira wasn't Kira, so all was for naught. It was all an experiment being conducted by the leader of the Founders, who was first seen in "The Search." Upon returning to *Deep Space Nine*, Odo won't reveal the details of his encounter with his fellow changeling and certainly won't repeat his confession at this point.

I now wonder how many more episodes will bring us to be brink only to pull us back at the last possible moment. My advice to the writers, producers and even Rene Auberjonois (he states in that article that he hopes Kira does not become aware of Odo's feelings towards her, yet he hopes "to build the complexity of the situation") is to either get this out in the open and proceed from there or just drop it. Although the latter suggestion would be very difficult to follow at this juncture. I would just ask this. Please, whatever you do, respect the

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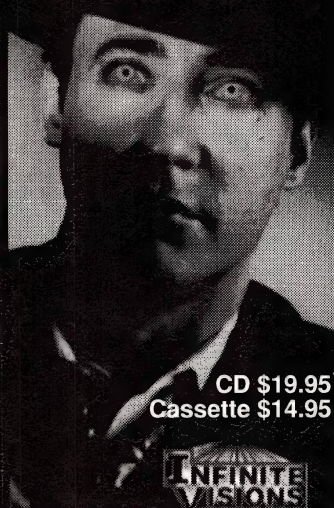
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intelligence and the loyalty of the fans. We deserve closure on an important plot element such as this. Do not string us along season after season. We deserve better.

Carole Strumph  
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### MST3K MIRTH

...The X-Files and Mystery Science Theater 3000 are two of my favorite TV shows. How wonderful to read articles about both shows in issue #210. Granted, this issue of STARLOG has a lot of neat stuff in its pages (Adam West, Clancy Brown, Nichelle Nichols, David Eddings, Mario Van Peebles and Jules Verne! All in one issue!), but at long last, here's an article on *MST3K*! The first time I saw this show was in 1990. The feature was *Robot Monster*, with two chapters of *Radar Men from the Moon* as a bonus. At first, I didn't know what to think, but I laughed a lot (nowadays I start giggling as soon as I see those doors opening). Lacking cable, I haven't been able to watch *MST3K* as often as I would like, but nowadays I watch taped episodes I borrow from friends. I do get to watch a more recent episode on occasion, but my friends and I have our own favorite "classic" episodes. Those include *Time of the Apes*, *Manos—the Hands of Fate*, *The Side Hackers*...my friends seem to prefer Joel to Mike. I've only seen two Mike episodes myself.

It's great to see how far *MST3K* has progressed (now friends and associates know that what I'm talking about when I mention the show). "Indifferent" movies? They not only attack really awful movies, but they even go after the movies I like, like *Godzilla vs. Megalon*. Well, I've been a fan of *Godzilla* for some time now, as impossible as he is. What fun to hear what he was saying whenever he opened his mouth! But what's funnier, the jokes that Mike (or Joel) and the 'bots hurl at the screen, or the goings on outside the theater? Well, for example, *Fire Maidens from Outer Space* is often referred to as the "evil Crow episode." Here, Crow T. Robot said or did something (I'm not sure what exactly) that caused a "dark spirit" named Timmy (a dark grey version of Crow) to appear on the Satellite of Love. Timmy caused much mischief until Joel finally knocked him out into space in a sequence rather like the end of *ALIENS*, only funnier. Inside the theater, the running gags had much to do with "Stranger in Paradise" and how the male characters in the film had "run out of analogies for sex!"

Kim Howard Johnson's article was great, but certain other pop-culture icons should have been mentioned. I mean, those wacky guys in space make a lot of references to things we probably won't forget, like *Monty Python* and not a few SF films and TV shows, such as *2001*, *Planet of the*

*Apes*, *The Outer Limits*, *Star Trek*, *Doctor Who* (especially when Tom Servo screams "Exterminate!")...need I go on? Anyone who watches the show would know what I'm saying here. I lost count of how often they just refer to movies as they watch them, and refer to movies they have watched while watching movies!

They're still trying to make an *MST3K* feature film? I'm still puzzling over whether that's a good idea or not. Would said film be like an episode of the show for the big screen (and if so, I think *Jurassic Park* would be a likely "experiment." And if Martin Scorsese and Steven Spielberg are fans of the show...wow.), or would it be a movie with a plot? Sure, it's just a show, but I envisioned a sort of expansion of *MST3K*'s backstory. I imagined a film that would neatly and briefly cover Joel Robinson's being launched into space, his five years on the Satellite of Love (where he creates his robot friends after having to watch movies alone), and his escape (and imminent replacement by Mike) at the end. But that's just my idea.

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### "VOYAGER" MESSAGES

...This is in response to those who had doubts about the placing of a female in the captain's chair of the new *Star Trek: Voyager*.

Thank you, Paramount, for having the courage to put Kate Mulgrew at the helm of the latest saga in the *Star Trek* Universe. After viewing the series to date, I feel Mulgrew adds a new dimension to the captaincy. Her Janeway shows the strength, wisdom and compassion that all leaders have in the *Star Trek* series, but she also shows one more trait that I've not seen before: vulnerability! It doesn't compromise her strength in leadership and she's not afraid to show it.

Of course, the *Voyager*'s circumstances are far different than the other *Star Trek* shows. And Captain Picard has come close to that vulnerability in several episodes. But Janeway is truly a three-dimensional character, and Mulgrew a fine actress for the part. With Janeway's lead, the rest of the crew, I'm sure, will follow. I would like to see the *Voyager* return to the Alpha Quadrant, but I hope they stay lost in space for a long while. The show just gets better with every new episode.

Bravo to *Star Trek: Voyager*. Bravo Kate (Kathryn Janeway) Mulgrew.

Alan Andrews  
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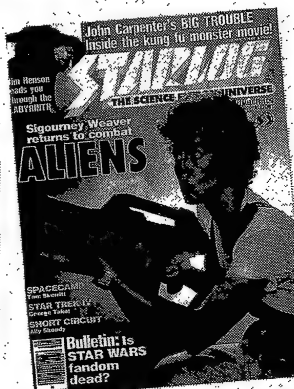
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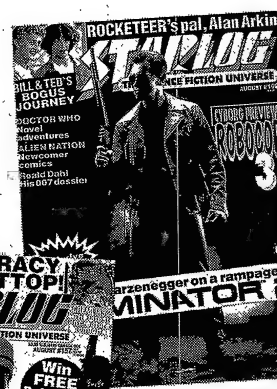
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# X-SYMBOL

David Duchovny  
wants everyone to  
know he's really  
not Fox Mulder.

By JULIANNE LEE

**C**onversing with David Duchovny of *The X-Files* is a little like watching the show itself—anything can happen. He goes from dead serious to uproariously funny in a heartbeat, and the only thing to do is tie a knot and hang on.

Feeling the growing pressures of being one of the leads in a TV series, Duchovny is a bit puzzled by the increasing notoriety he has earned playing Fox Mulder. *The X-Files* won the Golden Globe this year for Best Dramatic Series and is rapidly gaining widespread popularity, as are its stars. "I get confused over people's concern with whether or not I'm a nice guy. I work hard to make a good show and I think that's enough."

The dichotomy of Duchovny is that he *is* a nice guy, but honest almost to the point of pain. Especially about talking to the press. "I hate these things in theory," he observes of the interview process. "When I actually do them, I usually enjoy myself. But I'm very guarded of my time and of my privacy and of myself." When he grants interviews, "bits of myself leak away, are given away. And that's less for me and my loved ones to have."

"But I can't expect anybody to sympathize with that, because they're the fans and they get to do what they want. Celebrities just appear to have power, but they have no power. It's just whoever's watching."

## X-Idol

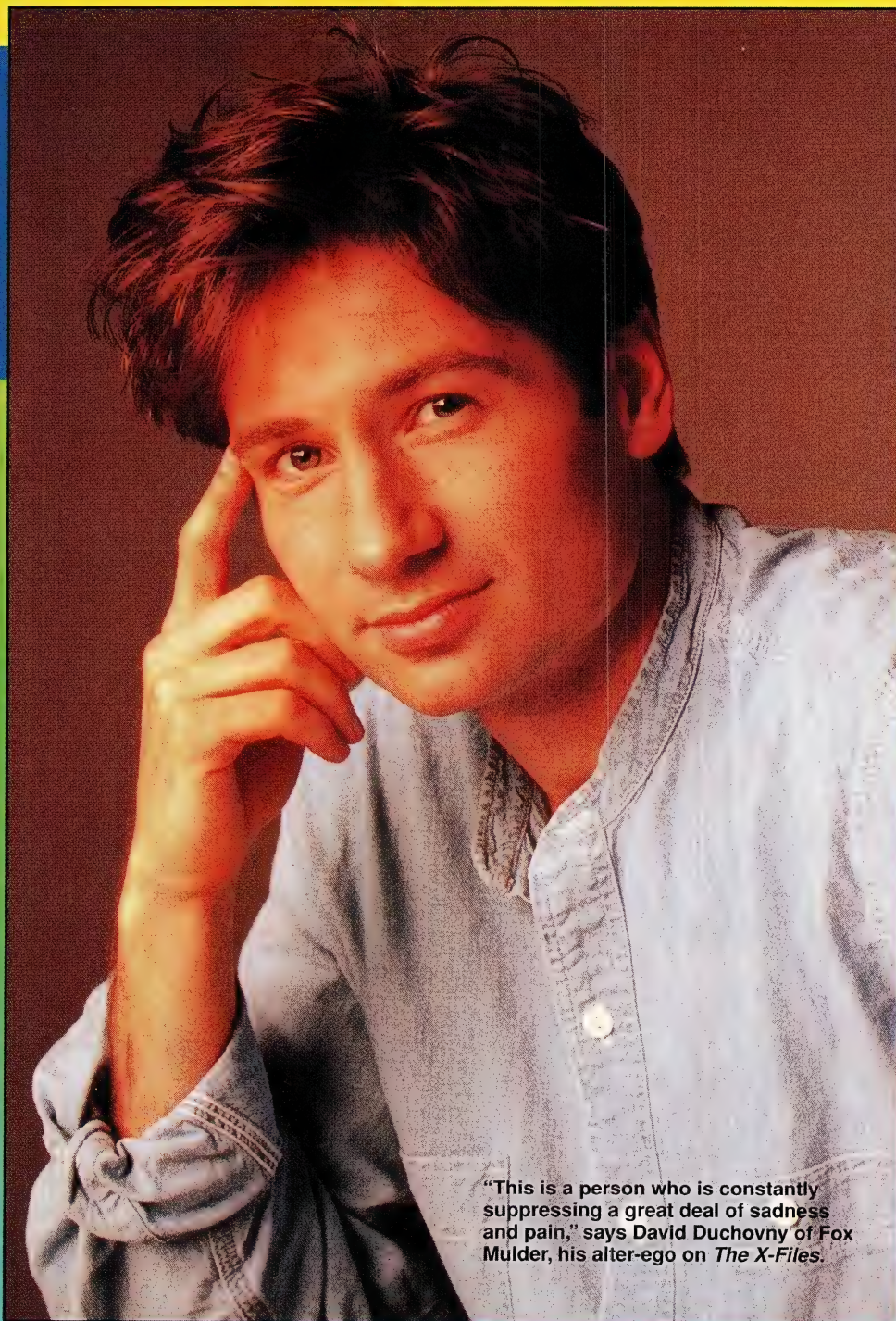
Duchovny, like most human beings, hates being pressured, which is why he long resisted speaking to fans on computer bulletin board systems. Since the series has been on, the Fox Network and *The X-Files*' producers have built up a rapport among the cyberspace "X-Philes," who soon expected to see Duchovny online.

"People on the outside go, 'What's the big deal? Why can't he just spend an hour in front of a computer screen with people who love him?' I just have an aversion to being coerced into doing *anything*," answers Duchovny. "Once people start to put pressure on me to either do an interview or go online, I immediately want to do it less than I *ever* wanted to do it. I would rather give

freely than feel strong-armed into doing something."

He gave freely enough in January when he dropped in on his first live cyber-chat to speak to approximately 100 avid followers.

JULIANNE LEE, Tennessee-based writer, profiled composer Mark Snow in *STARLOG SF EXPLORER* #7.



"This is a person who is constantly suppressing a great deal of sadness and pain," says David Duchovny of Fox Mulder, his alter-ego on *The X-Files*.

Photo: Deborah Feingold

All X-Files Photos: Copyright 1994, 1995 Fox Broadcasting



"The adoration part doesn't register as adoration," reveals Duchovny. "Sometimes it registers as pressure. But, I don't know, it's fairly new to me. I'm just trying to feel my way through it. I'm new to the celebrity thing. So, I'm trying to figure out how I can live a happy life and also not alienate people who have good wishes for me. All it is to me is flattering. And...nice. There's nothing I

hate about it. I mean, how could I hate that?

"What bothers me is people yelling, 'Mulder!' on the street. Or confusing the fact that I'm a human being who may have his own life to lead and doesn't want to be yelled at as a character I work at 14 hours a day on the one day I have off. You know what I mean? People don't have to like *me*, they just have to like the show."

Photo: Marcel Williams



Does this look like the sort of situation you would find an ex-Yale literature student in? Duchovny found his schooling of little help in landing acting jobs.

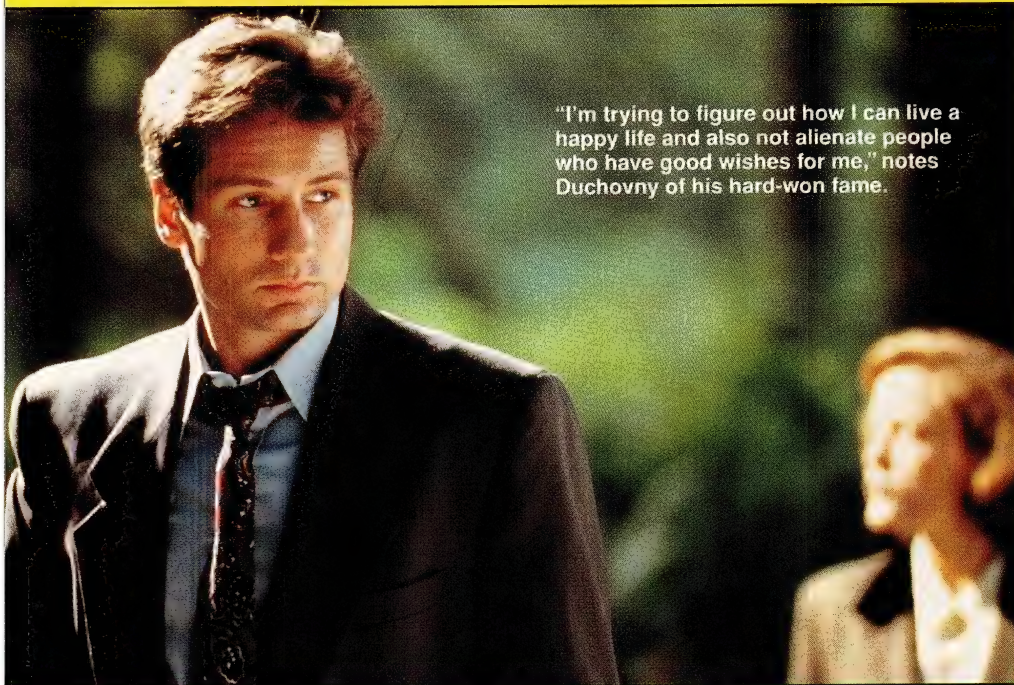


Photo: Chris H.B.



Photo: Ken Staniforth

Along with Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson), Mulder investigates cases involving the unknown, such as the voodoo crimes of "Fresh Bones."



## X-Improviser

Duchovny's approach to portraying Mulder is dedicated but relaxed, typically contradictory. "It's kind of instinctual. I couldn't say I have a checklist [of characteristics] to go down. I just try to find the physical and psychic center of the character and radiate out from that.

"I always thought the center of Mulder was a kind of detachment from other people's opinions and views," explains Duchovny, "as well as a very deep attach-

**"I work hard to make a good show and I think that's enough."**

ment to what he believes in. He would be kind of difficult to focus on because he would appear detached and attached at the same time. That's what I try to do.

"Physically, I felt his center was in the head. He tends to get top-heavy from time to time and to get surprised when his center moves to other parts of his body. It's moved to the heart and, in one episode, to the groin," says Duchovny, in reference to the episode "3," in which Mulder had an intimate encounter with a would-be vampire.

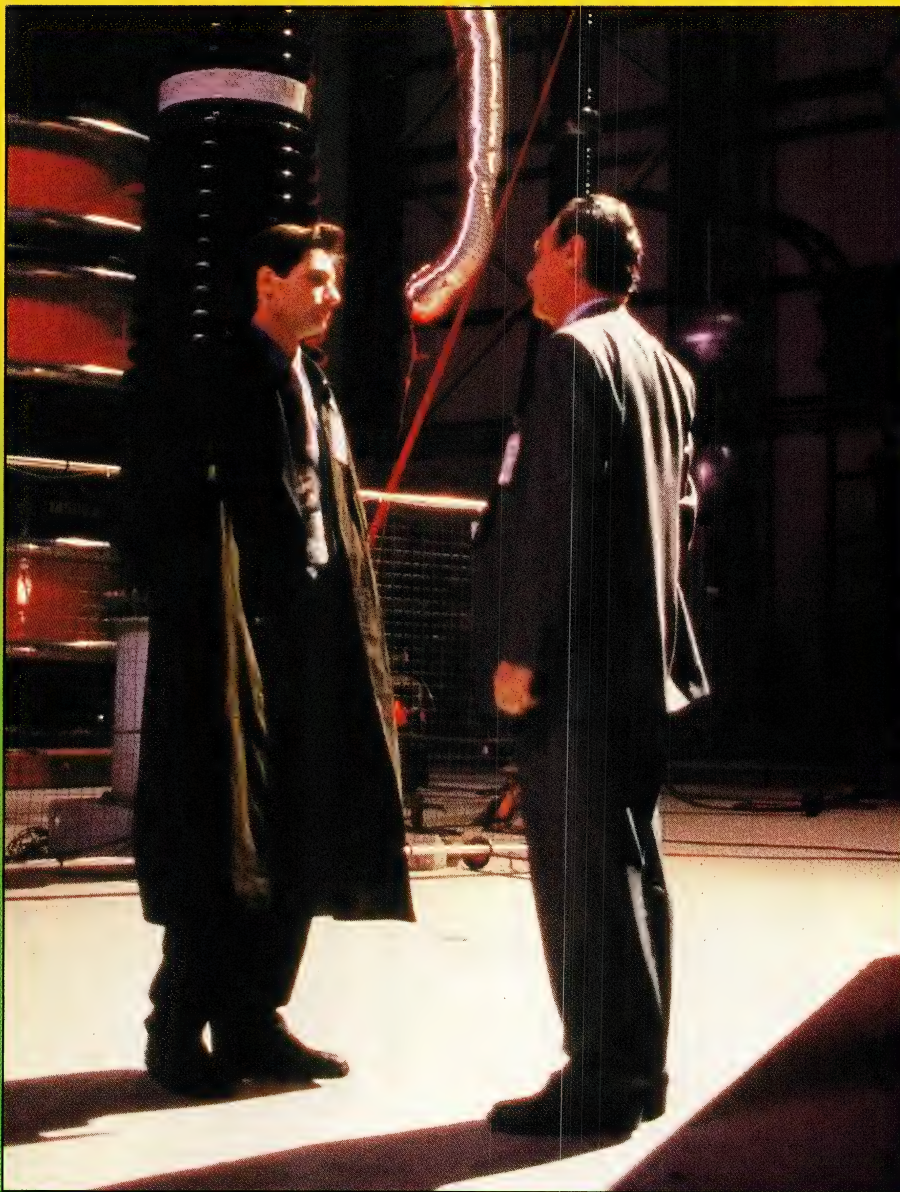
How much has Mulder changed over the past two years? "He's a little older," quips the actor.

Pain is a large part of how Duchovny sees Mulder. "This is a person who is constantly suppressing a great deal of sadness and pain. The way I approach every character is that nobody wants to be in pain. So they do things to combat their pain. But, there are always a few moments in a script or an episode where the pain comes through, regardless of how much the character tries to keep it down. That's the way I approach the drama."

For the future, Duchovny has no idea where Mulder is headed. "It's like I'm working on a big crochet quilt and doing only one stitch at a time. I don't see the whole blanket. I have to do so much work that I really don't have the luxury to sit back and steer the course. It's going to happen instinctually. And I'll just have to trust that they're going to be the right way."

Even though the producers let Duchovny insert an occasional bit of humor here and there, there's no room for improvisation during filming. "It's not really a show that stands for improvisation, because it's so chock full of exposition as it is—it's like there's no fat. You just have to tell the story. And if you go off on some improvisational tangent, it's just going to weaken it. See, we're all slaves to the story because we have to tell an intricate story with a few red herrings in about 42 minutes. It doesn't leave any room for stretching out into any other areas, which is sometimes too bad."

The first film of Duchovny's career was almost entirely improvisational. In *New*



According to Duchovny, tight plotting leaves little room for improvisation in scenes such as this one with Deep Throat (Jerry Hardin).



The vampire episode "3" was not a favorite of Duchovny's. "It had no logic."

Design & Layout: Yvonne Jang

Photo: Ken Staniforth



The multifaceted relationship between Mulder and Scully has been one of the central attractions of *The X-Files* from the start.

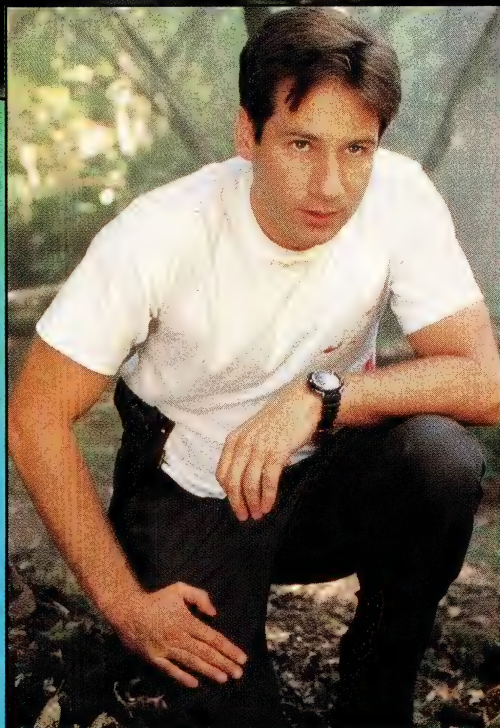


Photo: Chris H.B.

"I always thought the center of Mulder was a kind of detachment from other people's opinions and views," reveals Duchovny.

*Year's Day*, a Henry Jaglom film, he played a role that was reportedly drawn somewhat from David

know if he's competent, so you don't know if you can trust him—and your work suffers accordingly. So, if you get somebody that

## "I feel like I'm married to Mulder."

Duchovny himself.

"I wasn't as good an actor with scripts as I am now. At that point, I was afraid that I couldn't make somebody else's words on a page come alive as well as I could my own words," recalls Duchovny. "Improvisation has its merits and its disadvantages. The benefits are that it can be totally natural and

you trust and knows how to move the camera around and wants you to do the best that you can do, you do better work and it's more comfortable to be with that person. Every time they bring in a new guy, you have to feel him out and by the time you've felt him out, it's six days into the shoot and you've only got two left. So, it's tough."

Until Duchovny gets a job directing, he's  
(continued on page 71)

you can catch lightning in a bottle. Something amazing can happen and you'll get it on film. The disadvantage is that it rarely has a concision or focus because, like life, it tends to stretch out and not be centered."

Though Duchovny feels acting training is what an actor makes of it, his education as a performer was among the best to be had. He studied with Marsha Haufrecht who comes from the famous Actors' Studio in New York.

"I learned from her that basically anything goes. I learned to tell the truth, show whatever you're feeling at the moment, even if it seems to be wrong. If you're in a funeral and you feel like giggling, you have to go ahead and giggle because that's what you feel [as the character] like doing. And if you don't do that, you may be doing the correct thing for the scene, but you're going to be doing it as a liar."

## X-Director

Directing is also something Duchovny expects to do eventually, though he doesn't feel ready yet. "I think directing is like sex. Before you have sex, you can read all the books you want, but *doing it* is going to teach you a lot more. You can think all you want about it and then you're thrown into the water. I guess I'll be ready to direct when I get my first job, but I won't feel ready before then."

David Nutter and Rob Bowman are the directors on *The X-Files* most appreciated by Duchovny. "They let me do what I want," he says with tongue planted firmly in cheek. "An actor's relationship with a director is a very odd one because you really have to trust them. And in television, you're thrown this new director all the time. Here's this new guy, you don't know anything about him. You don't know if he's going to screw you, you don't



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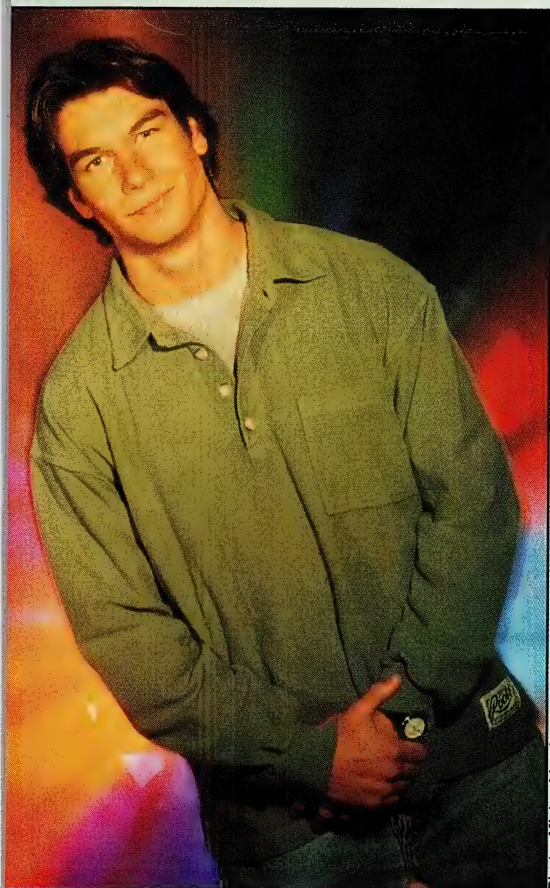


Photo: Michael Lavine

# Parallel Excitement

Fun is the name of the game for Jerry O'Connell & his "Sliders."

By KIM HOWARD JOHNSON

Rembrandt Brown (Cleavant Derricks), who becomes part of the group by accident. They aren't lost in time or lost in space, they're lost in an endless series of parallel Earths.

As they slide from reality to reality, they often encounter different versions of themselves, which O'Connell says keeps it all very interesting.

"That's a lot of fun as an actor, getting to play many different parts," he says. "One of the drags of being in a TV show is playing the same character week after week after week, and it gets really boring. That's not going to happen on this show, because I'm playing a completely new person practically every other week! It's more challenging than it is confusing, though."

On his travels through the parallel worlds to date, O'Connell has encountered a few nice places to visit, but he wouldn't want to stay.

"The Communist world [featured in the two-hour premiere] was fun to visit, and it was interesting to see what the world would be like if it was all governed by Communism, but I *really* wouldn't want to live there! I was happy when they yelled 'Wrap!' and I was able to go home to watch my choice of capitalist TV stations!"

O'Connell admits that they did visit one world that he wouldn't mind living in, however. "We went to one world where oil has been discovered near San Francisco, and I'm a millionaire—there's a big oil gusher in my backyard! Unfortunately, we were only allowed five minutes in that world."

## Parallel Worlds

The actor admits he finds the concept of parallel worlds fascinating. Although it has long been a staple of science-fiction literature, parallel worlds have only rarely

**Q**uinn Mallory is sliding through parallel worlds, and Jerry O'Connell is happy to be going along for the ride. O'Connell is starring in Fox-TV's *Sliders*, a new science-fiction action-adventure series that follows a young genius and his three companions as they "slide" from one alternate version of Earth to another, looking for *their* home. Some of the Earths they land on may have been overrun by Nazis, or are enveloped in a new Ice Age, while others are remarkably similar to our own (in one of them, Elvis still lives! And he's still playing Vegas!).

"It isn't a typical science-fiction show," says O'Connell. "It's very light-hearted, not very 'science-y.' It revolves more around the four lead characters than it does stunts, explosions or science-fiction tricks like that—although they are a major part of the show, they're not the driving force. The characters make *Sliders* different from the other science-fiction shows, and that's what makes me enjoy it so much."

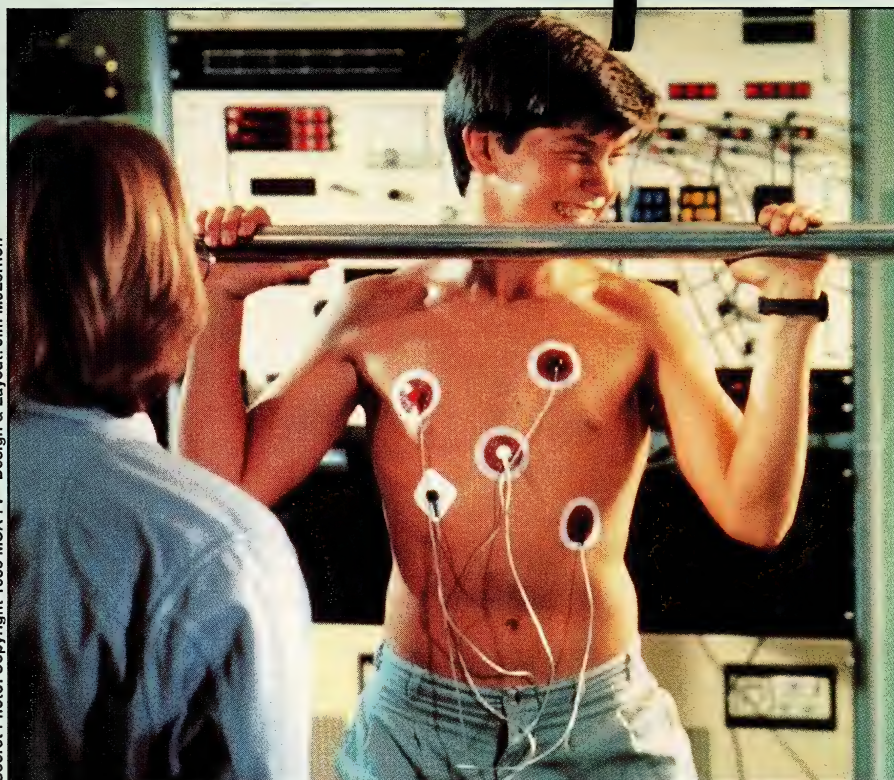
Graduate physics student Quinn Mallory (O'Connell) is joined on his journeys by co-worker and would-be romantic interest Wade Wells (Sabrina Lloyd), Professor Maximilian Arturo (John Rhys-Davies), whose theories on cosmic wormholes inspired Mallory's pursuit of knowledge, and down-on-his-luck R&B singer



Quinn Mallory and his band of adventurers are dealing with a crisis on infinite Earths and Jerry O'Connell leads them home on *Sliders*.

*KIM HOWARD JOHNSON, veteran STARLOG correspondent, is the author of Life Before (& After) Monty Python (St. Martin's, \$15.95). He profiled Rachel Talalay in issue #214.*





"My *Secret Identity* was fun to work on," O'Connell says of his earlier SFTV venture. "I was playing a kid with superpowers."

been explored on television.

"I think it's a new angle on science fiction," says O'Connell. "It isn't time travel. It's something different that really hasn't been touched, and that's what's interesting about it. The whole idea of parallel universes is a lot of fun—what if I had turned left instead of right? It makes for a nice angle on a science-fiction show."

He got the role of Quinn Mallory through the typical auditioning process; although he is a science-fiction fan, he didn't think he would be lucky enough to land the part. "[Producers] John Landis, Bob Weiss and [writer/creator] Tracy Tormé were there," O'Connell says. "I was really hoping to get it, but as an actor, I wasn't expecting too much."

O'Connell is in the midst of filming at the *Sliders* soundstages, and must dash back and forth to the set for more shooting. Upon his return, he explains that the current scenes involve a world where society is dominated by women.

"Everyone talks about Hillary Clinton's loudmouth husband, the First Man," he laughs. "It's very funny. Arturo runs for Mayor of San Francisco, and he's the first man to run for office. I'm doing some scenes at his campaign headquarters."

For O'Connell, the most interesting location so far for the show, which is shot in Vancouver, was for a rather brief sequence in the pilot episode. "We were supposed to have gone to an ice world," he says. "They put snow on an entire street—foam and snow on houses for an entire square block. I had never really seen anything like that before in my entire life—I thought it was pretty extravagant!"

Many episodes of *Sliders* involve visits to more than one parallel world, and the actor admits he sometimes has trouble keeping track of just which world they're on at any particular moment. "It's a crazy show, and it is chaotic," says O'Connell. "It gets confusing at times, but that's what makes it fun!"

O'Connell, who was one of the young leads of Rob Reiner's *Stand By Me* and went on to star in *My Secret Identity*, says *Sliders* is by far his most FX-heavy job. "We're doing a lot of stunts and a lot of special FX—more than I've done on any other gig. It seems that we're tumbling, jumping and flinging ourselves into mats

**"I think it's a new angle on science fiction."**

and stunt pads every day. The rest of the cast are all troupers—John, Cleavant and Sabrina—we're all doing cartwheels and somersaults every day, and it's really a lot of fun. And that's another enjoyable thing about *Sliders*—it's very physical. It's a really great show to work on. It's a great atmosphere, the whole cast is a blast and the storylines are fun to play with. We're not stuck in a studio all the time—we're outside, we're on the water—it's endless. It's really not like work!"

Some of the special FX are more elaborate than others, explains the actor; his



Photo: Michael Lavine

"It's like working with a legend," raves O'Connell of his co-star John Rhys-Davies. "Our characters are very close, we're both scientists on the show."

most intricate FX work to date involved a scene with his double shot for the pilot.

"We did a motion-control sequence, in which a camera move is stored in a computer so the camera can perform it over and over flawlessly," says O'Connell. "The camera moves by itself like a big robot. It was for a scene where I see my double and we have a conversation and we walk around each other. I had to do it once just talking to air and the mechanical camera did all of the moves. Then, they put me and the camera in front of a blue screen, and the camera did all of the same moves that the computer told it to, while I played my double. Then, they put the two together. It took about two full days to do. It's hard enough talking to thin air, but it's even harder when you have to be here in two seconds, and in two more steps, you have to be over there in 2.5 seconds. It's crazy, but it really looks good."

## Parallel Roles

There are some similarities, but also some significant differences between Quinn Mallory, genius, and O'Connell. "He's close to me in the sense that he's young, but I'm pretty much playing against type," says O'Connell. "He's getting his doctorate in physics at Berkeley, and I was never much of a science or math student. I'm hoping my old algebra teacher will catch a show so she can see how much I've improved!"



The actor's preparation for *Sliders* did not include math lessons, he notes, but a bit of speculative science and fiction.

"I did some reading suggested by our head writer, Tracy Tormé, and I brushed up on parallel universe theories," says O'Connell. "I had read the pilot and already had a pretty good idea of what a parallel universe was. It's really an interesting concept. As a TV show, the possibilities are endless—what you might be like on another world or how different events would have affected the world in general. One of our early episodes [written by former STARLOG contributors Bill Rabkin and Lee Goldberg] features a worldwide British Empire, where the United States lost the Revolutionary War."

O'Connell notes that all four of the lead characters fell into their roles from the beginning of production. "We were all excited about the pilot, and I think that



O'Connell (second from left) was one of the young actors who starred in Rob Reiner's star-making *Stand By Me*. The others: Wil Wheaton, Corey Feldman, River Phoenix.



Photo: Jack Rowand

*Sliders* is confusing to O'Connell at times, "But I'm lucky enough to have Sabrina [Lloyd], John and Cleavant [Derricks] to push me in the right direction."

really shows," he says. "I had a lot of fun on the pilot, and when we found out it got picked up, it was like we had gotten the ball and now we were going to get to run with it!"

Perhaps the most distinguished name in the cast is John Rhys-Davies, best known to moviegoers as Sallah in the Indiana Jones series.

"It's like working with a legend," O'Connell says. "He's a lot of fun to work with. I didn't know he was doing the show until after I got the part, and I was pleased as punch. Our characters are very close, because we're both scientists on the show, so we spend a lot of screen time together. He's a blast! I have a lot of fun working with John. He's very professional—he's John Rhys-Davies!"

Being a science-fiction show, *Sliders* provides its actors with some unique problems to solve. "It's very technical in some senses, and I'm still learning so much each day. I'm a film student at NYU, and during my breaks, I find myself calling my friends back at school to say, 'I can't believe the shot we just did!' Playing a dual role each week takes a lot of imagination, and being a science-fiction fan myself and watching so much science fiction over the years has helped a lot. You have to have a real good imagination, not only to watch an SF show, but also to work on one."

## Parallel Heroes

Although some of the Quinn Mallorys on parallel worlds are very similar to O'Connell's original character, there are also notable exceptions. "In one of the episodes, there's a plague on the Earth, and I play Patient Zero—the person who supposedly started the plague," says O'Connell. "I start looking for a cure. I was in all of this makeup, my face was painted yellow, I had a wig and red contacts to give me red eyes. It was a much darker Quinn, and that's going to be a really nice show."

The four leads jump from Earth to Earth in *Sliders*, searching for the world that they





Although Quinn Mallory is a theoretical physics prodigy, O'Connell "was never much of a science or math student."

Almost anything can happen from one moment to the next on *Sliders*, and that's another reason there's nothing quite like it on TV at the moment—it can suddenly go into any area. "I don't see it leaning in any particular direction," says Jerry O'Connell. "If I were to summarize it in any way, I would say it's a light science-fiction show. It's fun, but it can be very dark at times. It's not going in any one particular direction. You have no idea what's going to happen. I

**"This highway is never going to end...but there are always exits!"**

have no idea what's going to happen. That's why I think the show is so appealing.

"It takes so many directions, it's tough to say where I would like it to go personally, because it's going *everywhere*. And it has *gone* everywhere. What I'm really anticipating is where they're going to take it next. It's like I'm a fan working on the show—I can't wait for the new script after every episode, so I can see what's going on next week!"

came from, but the actor advises fans not to expect them home too soon.

"There are an infinite amount of parallel Earths out there, so each week we hope to get back to ours. That's part of the fun. Whenever we land on an Earth, we're certain for the first few minutes that this is home. Could this be home? Is it? It's very interesting how we find out we're *not* home. We've done everything from floods and tidal waves to an ice world to meeting killer wasps with six-foot wingspans. Everything from the subtle to the insane."

O'Connell says that the number of parallel Earths they could encounter are as infinite as possible storylines for the series. "Everyone who has seen the pilot says 'It's a great show, you could do this and this and this.' This highway is never going to end...but there are always exits!

"I grew up watching *Star Trek*, and then *The Next Generation*," says O'Connell. "I used to watch shows like *The Time Tunnel*."

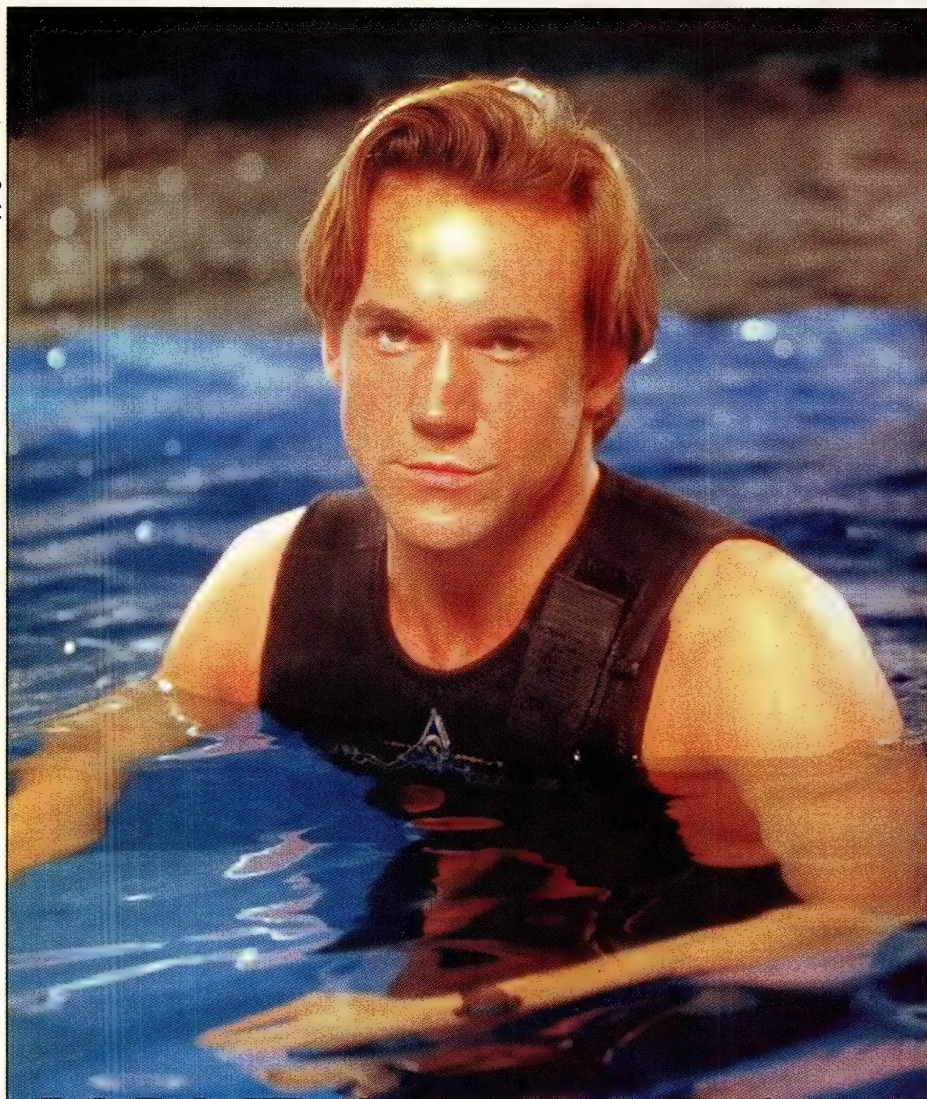
O'Connell's SF past also includes the lead role in *My Secret Identity*, a superhero series that he remembers fondly. "*My Secret Identity* was fun to work on. I was playing a kid with superpowers, and it was such a blast for me at that age. It was a fun show to watch, and it was even more fun to do. *Sliders* is a little older for me, and I think that's nice—as I grow, so do the parts I get, which is a good thing!"

**"There are an infinite amount of parallel Earths out there, so each week we hope to get back to ours," O'Connell explains. "That's part of the fun."**



Photo: Michael Lavine





# UNDERWATER COWBOY

Submarine hero  
Edward Kerr is still,  
under the sea, just a  
kid at heart.

By BILL WILSON

**A**ctor Edward Kerr was perhaps best known for his TV commercials for Toyota, Chevrolet, Miller Lite and Old Spice before landing the role of Lieutenant James Brody on *seaQuest*, so it's not really surprising that he wants to set the record straight about all those products. "Yes, I *have* taken the Old Spice challenge. I tried and use Old Spice. I like Miller Lite Ice beer. Toyota and Chevrolet? I drive them *both*," he jokes, "at the same time."

These plugs aside, Kerr settles in to discuss his role on *seaQuest*. "Brody's a great guy. He's full of self-confidence but he isn't arrogant. He's more apt to take things lightly rather than seriously, but he's a good person with a strong sense of values. There's never any doubt that the crew can always depend on him."

That statement makes Lt. Brody sound like Mr. Perfect. Is he just too good to be true? "Not necessarily," Kerr explains. "He's a good guy. He means well. Self-confident in a way, but not so self-confident that he doesn't have any fear or doesn't worry about offending anybody. He's not arrogant in the sense that he thinks he's the greatest. But he is a little vulnerable, a little weak in some areas by carrying off this act of bravado. He was raised by his grandparents, and he doesn't really know much about his past and he doesn't have many loved ones. The military has been his family. He may have put forth this image as a brash, clever cowboy type to make up for the fact that he doesn't really have anyone to whom he's close."

The episode "When We Dead Awaken," in which Brody encounters his long-thought-dead mother after she awakens from a cryogenic sleep, gives us insight into his vulnerability. "He opens up more in that episode than in any other before or since. He's usually Mr. Cocky, Mr. Gung-Ho Military, but the military doesn't run his life. He goes about his job and respects the military, but he also has his own sense of self and doesn't take life so seriously."

Brody, always willing to bend the rules to get the job done, is often at odds with Commander Ford (Don Franklin). "In the first episode, there was a lot of tension between Brody and Ford," Kerr points out, "but that storyline really hasn't played itself out too much since. Every now and then, there are little sprinkles of tension, little jabs and wisecracks we direct at each other. There's definitely this underlying competitiveness between them."

"Ford is much more stern and more by-the-book military, whereas Brody is more willing to jump in and say, 'Let's get this done and move on,' regulations or no regulations. With more of a penchant for flair, he



envision himself a John Wayne type, though he really isn't as much like that as he would like to think he is. He gets put into these situations where his skill as a special weapons expert is put to the test and hopefully he pulls it out. When it comes down to a tense moment, and the crew needs to depend on him, he'll come through, though he may posture more about his contribution than Ford."

### John Wayne?

Brody's specialty is special weapons and tactics, something Kerr knows a little about himself. "I grew up on a farm near Kansas City, shooting shotguns. My two older brothers and I would go out and shoot skeet—clay pigeons. But I've never really been into weapons," he reminisces. "When I was a kid, my idols were John Wayne and Clint East-



Among the new crew of the *seaQuest*, Edward Kerr's Lieutenant James Brody is the devil-may-care, can-do man of action.

"Brody is just a guy with a Wild West attitude stuck in the future," reveals Kerr.

"You have to play to the scene's reality. You have to really *believe* what you're dealing with is real, even in a situation that defies reality. If I'm playing a scene in a cafe with a girl and I'm trying to ask her out on a date, that's something I've dealt with in real life, so I can imagine what that experience is like and use that in the scene. When you're dealing with killer plants or some other absurd

**"It really helps when you have an active imagination."**

wood. I loved cowboy and war movies. I grew up playing cowboys and Indians and cops and robbers. I had G.I. Joe and the whole bit. In college, I always played that military game with the paint shooters.

"Playing Brody doesn't come down so much to having a strong military background or interest as it is being able to portray someone who's really cocky. He really *thinks* he's John Wayne. Personally, I have a kind of kidding-around cockiness—innocent and playful. Sure, I'm self-confident; this business—or *any* business for that matter—is too competitive to be able to perform without some measure of self-confidence. I'm still learning a lot about this industry, but I'm confident that when I apply myself, I can figure it out. I definitely don't think I'm the next Marlon Brando. I've got just as many, if not more, faults as anybody else.

"Much of Brody's fun side, wisecracking and feigning cockiness, is like me," Kerr continues. "And that John Wayne cowboy is probably a lot like that 12-year-old kid back in Kansas City running around with a pop-gun. That's what's fun about playing this character. You get to run around and carry a gun and be the good guy. It requires remembering what it was like to throw yourself into that role as a kid and just enjoying playing."

Is that the way he has always approached acting, or is it just more apparent with a character like Brody because of the circumstances? "Acting is playing. You have to throw caution to the wind and throw yourself

into the role, but I also think playing a character in an action piece permits you to not temper yourself so much. It's extremely difficult to imagine you're staring down a 50-foot robot, a man-eating plant or a fire-breathing worm from the middle of the Earth."

Kerr finds it infinitely more difficult playing to special FX rather than to another actor or object actually right in front of him.



When he was chosen for *seaQuest*, Kerr was in Mexico shooting *Magic Island*, in which he and Lee Armstrong played pirates in search of lost treasure.

All Magic Island Photos: Copyright 1994 Full Moon Entertainment/Courtesy Sam Irvin





Kerr sees the appeal of Brody as his regular-guy quality as opposed to the show's exotic characters like Dagwood.

the CGI stuff. I have to believe that stuff is real, and I have to trust the other creative people to produce something that the viewer believes is real, so it doesn't come off looking hokey. Every actor has a bit of trepidation when it comes to playing a role in science fiction, because you're often put into situations which are total fantasy. So much is dependent upon what happens in post-production long after you've played the scene. That's always a cause for concern."

### Clint Eastwood?

Kerr came to *seaQuest* as a novice in the science-fiction universe, but he was familiar with the show's first season. "I've never really been a big science fiction fan," he explains, almost sheepishly, as if it's a felony around here, not a simple misdemeanor. "When I was a kid, I wasn't allowed to watch much TV, but I did go the movies, and Westerns were always my favorites. I loved action-adventure stuff, but science fiction never really interested me that much; I don't know why. I loved *ALIEN*, that was great. It was full of suspense, and I really, honestly believed there was an alien creature aboard that ship killing people!

"The problem is that there have been some really hokey SF movies and TV shows in the past that may have scared off people who aren't necessarily in tune with the genre," Kerr continues. "That's why when you attempt a science fiction series or film, you carry an extra burden. You have to live down that hokey reputation from what has gone on before. But good science fiction done well has survived and prospered in this

medium. Hopefully, that's what we'll be perceived as doing here with *seaQuest*."

Kerr's concern for the mainstream perception of science fiction weighed heavily in his decision to accept service on *seaQuest*. "It was a very strong consideration. But seeing the things that Steven Spielberg has done in the past made my decision much easier. I had seen some episodes from last season, and liked what I saw. Ultimately, though, I just really liked Brody. I've always seen him as a person misplaced in time. It goes back to that kid playing cowboy, only thrust into the future, out of place. Harrison Ford as Han Solo, kicking the *Millennium Falcon*, he's

"It's great to have an adventure each week."

not really a futuristic guy at all. He just happens to be there, but his actions and attitude bring a real human element to that film. He helped make it more believable, involving and enjoyable.

"That's the way I looked at Brody," he continues. "He's sort of an ordinary Joe who just happens to be there and is forced to deal with these conflicts." As such, Kerr believes it may be easier for *seaQuest*'s male audience to relate to his Brody-as-everyman character than the stiff, militaristic Ford or the boy-genius Lucas Wolzenak (Jonathan Brandis). "Brody is just a guy with a Wild West attitude stuck in the future. He doesn't have any unusual physical characteristics like Dagwood [Peter DeLuise], the genetically engineered Dagger, or Tony Piccolo

[Michael DeLuise], the military Experimental who breathes underwater with gills. He's just an ordinary guy, and maybe that's his most endearing quality. He could be *you*."

Like most of the other new *seaQuest* crew, Kerr's casting happened at a breakneck pace, a result of the producers' desire to establish the new cast and new location (Universal Studios Florida) as quickly as possible heading into the series' second season. "I was in Mexico during summer 1994 doing a movie. Universal had wanted me to come in and read for the part then. When I finished the film, I first flew to Chicago to do another Old Spice commercial," he says with a wink at another unabashed plug, "and by the time I got back to LA, they had already tested other people. Fortunately for me, I got the chance to read. That was on a Tuesday. I did a screen test Thursday, and by Saturday I was on a plane to Florida. It all happened so fast."

The exposure of being on *seaQuest* certainly hasn't hurt Kerr's career. In fact, he hopes to have several projects to choose from during the show's summer hiatus. "I've done two films in the past year which will be coming out soon, and I have my agent investigating other opportunities as well," he explains. One of the movies was the time-travel fantasy *Magic Island* (SF EXPLORER #6). "That's the low-budget film I was shooting in Mexico when *seaQuest* was casting. It stars the kid from *Home Improvement*, Zachary Bryan. His character finds this magic book which lets him travel through time, and I play Prince Morgan Hildebrandt, a 17th-century swashbuckler with a rapier, goatee and earring. I fight Blackbeard the pirate and go on this adventure to discover lost treasure."

Prince Hildebrandt is much like the cowboy type Kerr would later personify in

*BILL WILSON, veteran STARLOG correspondent, profiled Peter DeLuise in issue #214.*



Brody, and he found that his experiences with special FX prepared him well for *seaQuest*'s killer plants and 50-foot robots. "Magic Island was great. As a matter of fact, we got to fight a pizza tree and a sand shark, and there was this cool statue in the jungle that talked," he says, his eyes widening with the vivid recollection. "This was my first real experience working with CGI FX, and it was great fun. It really helps when you have an active imagination."

Kerr previously starred in the NBC miniseries *The Secrets of Lake Success*, the result of a development deal he had signed with the network. In that prime-time soap, he played a young attorney. In *Above Suspicion* (originally titled *The Rhinehart Theory*) with Joe Mantegna and Christopher Reeve, he portrays "Nick Cain, a kind of screwed-up cop, younger brother to Reeve, who plays the part of parent and tries to straighten out this irresponsible jerk," Kerr describes. "This guy thinks he's cool, but he's really kind of pathetic."

Of his roles to date, however, Lt. Brody remains Kerr's favorite. "Brody has the adventurous side of Prince Morgan Hildebrandt, the vulnerability of Nick Cain and perhaps some of the confidence of Tony Parrish, the character from *Lake Success*. He's actually a lot like the Lite Ice guy," Kerr grins, offering yet another tongue-in-cheek product endorsement.

Kerr does note the subtle differences in the finality of movie characters and the open-endedness of TV series roles. "In a feature film, you have a beginning and an end," he explains. "You meet that character, you learn about him, you go through those conflicts with him and the show is over. In episodic television, you don't know what's going to happen to my character a month from now. Hopefully, I can carry his personality traits through those twists and turns in subsequent storylines and maintain some level of continuity, but you can't prepare too far in advance. If you take a look at a show like *Melrose Place*, it's incredible the twists and turns and personality changes those characters undergo from week to week. It amazes me that they can maintain any type of continuity at all!"

## Marlon Brando?

The actor's most memorable episode by far was "When We Dead Awaken." "But not for selfish reasons," he laughs. "What I really like about it is that it was a really well-written script, not just that I had a lot of involvement in it." (The episode details the story of Brody's mother witnessing a murder when he is three years old, contracting an incurable disease which requires her being placed in suspended animation pending a cure, and being revived 20 years later, only to be hounded by the killer.) "It shows a real human side to this character," Kerr maintains. "It's difficult, when you have a large ensemble cast, to get a clear understanding of just who each person is and what they're about. 'Awaken' gives us a glimpse of what Brody's really like, showing that vulnerabil-

ity he so often masks behind an arrogant facade. And that whole Oedipal thing we had going when he found himself attracted to her at the bar—before he discovers who she really is—was great fun," he laughs.

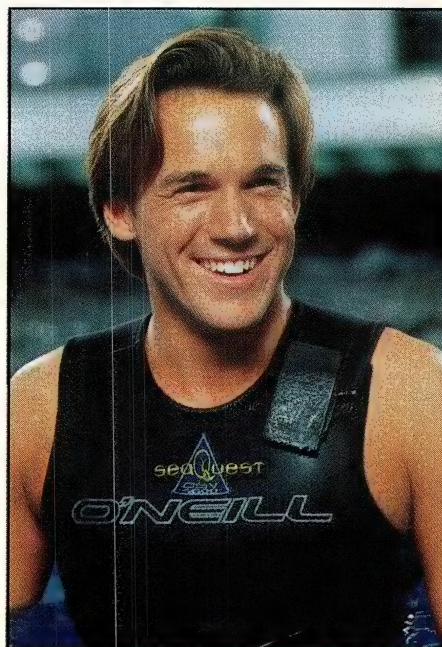
As each week progresses, *seaQuest*'s writers, producers and directors take great pains to spotlight individual cast members. "It's great to have an adventure each week, but it's much better to have an adventure which involves characters you have an investment in, ones you truly care about," Kerr explains. "That's again why 'Awaken' was a favorite of mine, because of the insight into my character it brought out. It gave me an opportunity to show James Brody as a compassionate human being."

Kerr graduated from Vanderbilt with a degree in history. He brings a historical perspective to *seaQuest*'s futuristic setting. "As a student of history, I always thought you would be better able to predict and appreciate the events of the future by fully understanding the past," he offers. "After all, as they say, 'History repeats itself.' Certain trends of today will most assuredly reoccur. But in the show we're not really that far into the future, and this season we haven't been as concerned with projecting contemporary issues ahead to see their effects."

"The premiere episode, with the development of the genetically engineered supersoldiers and the references to the long-term effects of the destruction of the rain forests, I found fascinating. I hope we do more of that, because we're not talking about a series which takes place in the year 3,000, we're talking only 30 years from now. To put that into perspective, there are world leaders today who could still be in power then! I would really like to see us take more present-day concerns and extrapolate them ahead 30 years. We're at a distinct advantage there over *Star Trek*," Kerr asserts, "because while they did a good job drawing analogies to present-day social, economic and environmen-

tal problems, their stories were set too far ahead in the future for us to draw a natural link to present day. We're fully capable of foreseeing at least some small measure of what the world will be like 30 years from now."

And where does Edward Kerr think *he* will be in 2025? "I hope I have a happy, healthy family. I'm interested in producing my own stuff some day. I would like to work in all facets of the industry: writing, directing, producing. I'm interested in business and real estate development as well. Maybe I'll be a venture capitalist. I would really love to be a race car driver, too, quite honestly." And with that, the cocky kid from Kansas City mounts his trusty steed and rides off into the sunset.



"Much of Brody's fun side, wisecracking, and feigning cockiness, is like me," admits Kerr.



Armstrong, Oscar Dillon and Kerr face off against *Magic Island* star Zachery Ty Bryan. "Magic Island was great," raves Kerr.

Design & Layout: Yvonne Jang



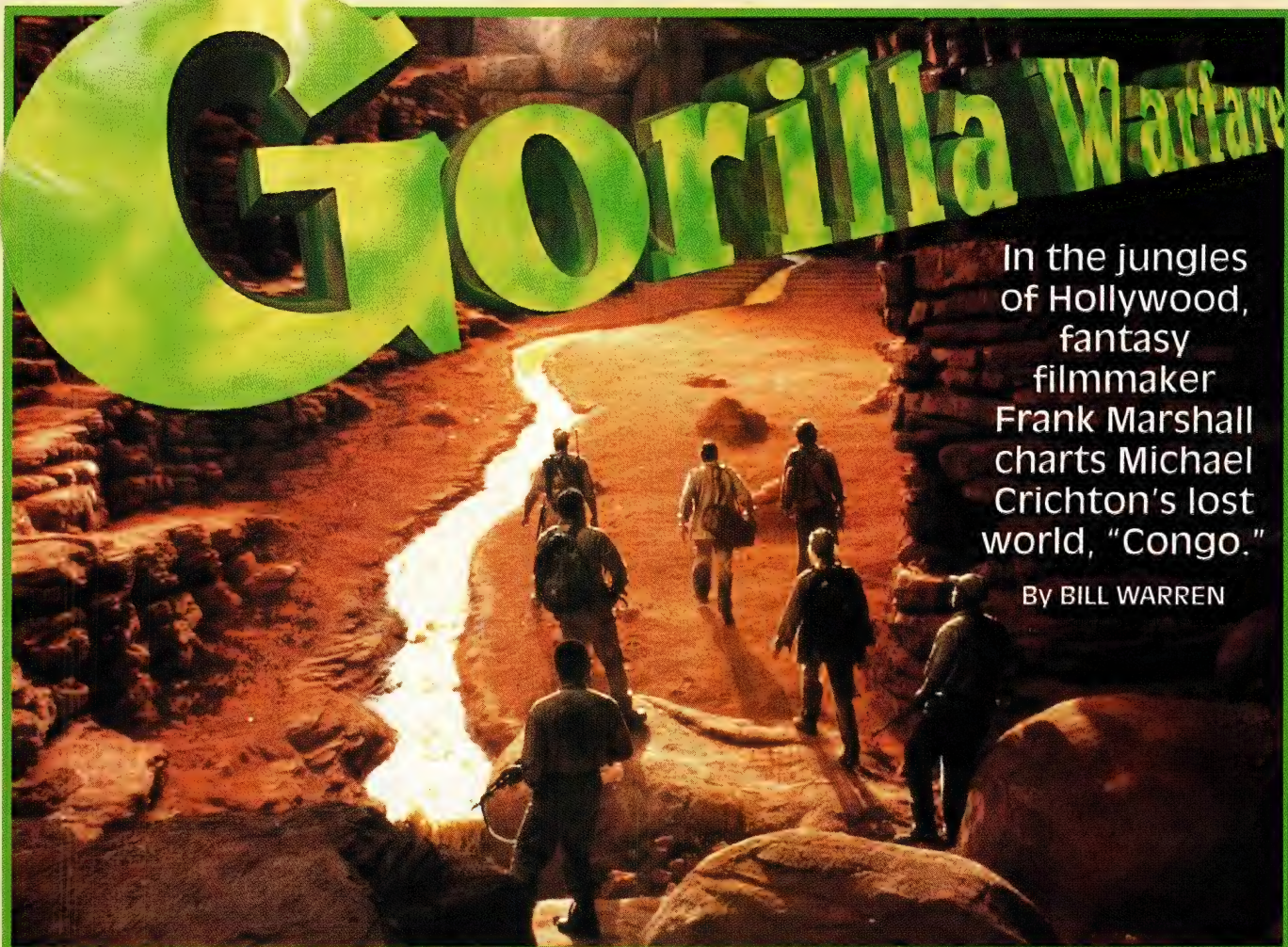


Photo: Merrick Morton

In the jungles of Hollywood, fantasy filmmaker Frank Marshall charts Michael Crichton's lost world, "Congo."

By BILL WARREN

**T**he cramped canyon is an ancient gash in the Earth, a crumbling gorge where black volcanic rock is rent asunder to reveal the sandstone beneath. The many shadowy holes along one side of the canyon glare darkly like the vacant eyesockets of a bone-dry skull.

Across the dank floor of the gulch shuffle grey apes: distorted, ugly perversions of nature—from their flat feet and fused hands to the baseball caps on their human heads. As one, they stop in their tracks and stand upright, looking even weirder than before, if possible. And then the strange grey apes go

off to have their heads put on, here on Stage 30 at Sony Studios in Culver City, California.

After years of false starts, rewritten scripts and a series of directors, Michael Crichton's novel *Congo* is finally being filmed. A relaxed-looking Frank Marshall, dressed in a plaid shirt and chinos, is hard to pick out of the similarly clad crew, because he doesn't have the tense air of a director who has been shepherding a multimillion-dollar picture for months.

He can even afford a couple of minutes to tell STARLOG a little about the plot of his very big movie. "It's your basic Michael Crichton plot," Marshall admits, "man against nature. We have Peter Elliot [Dylan Walsh], a scientist, and Amy, a gorilla he has taught to communicate with people via sign language, traveling to a lost city in the Virunga region of the Congo. He wants to return her home to the African mountains. Also, he feels that he might be able to learn something—since she can communicate with him, perhaps she can act as an interpreter with the other gorillas. There is a kind of teaching theme throughout the movie."

The movie begins as Charles Travis (Brisco County's Bruce Campbell)—son of R.B. Travis (Joe Don Baker), the head of the hi-tech communications (and other stuff) firm TraviCom—leads an expedition into the heart of the Congo, seeking chemically flawless industrial diamonds, which are the key

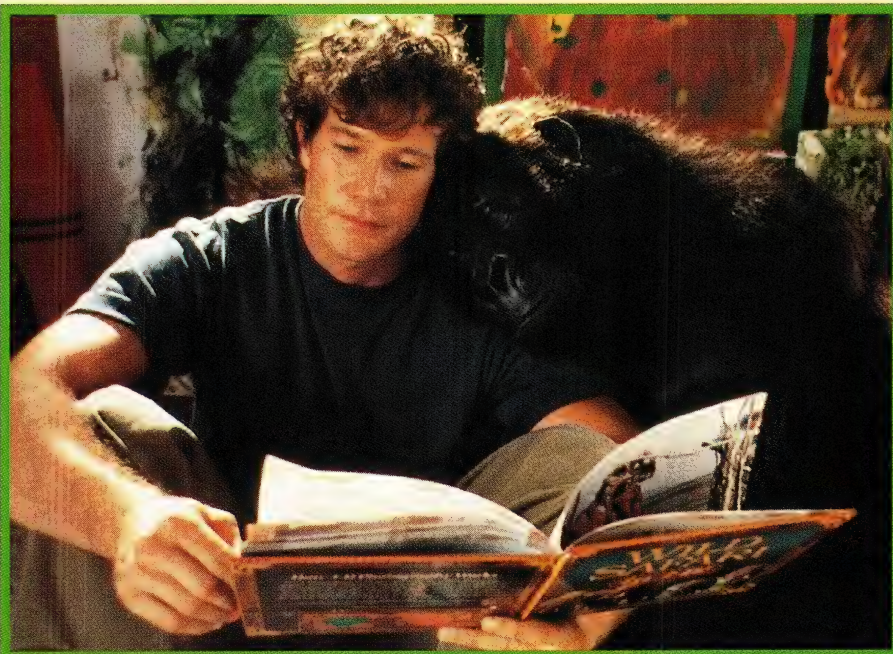


Photo: Merrick Morton

Every story needs a beginning, and *Congo*—Frank Marshall's adaptation of Michael Crichton's novel—begins with a man, Peter Elliot (Dylan Walsh), and his ape, Amy.

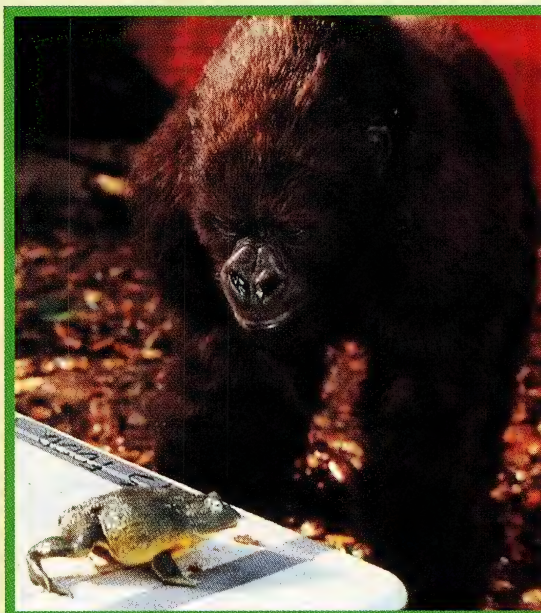


Photo: Bruce Birmelin



FX maestro Stan Winston, director Marshall and producer Kathleen Kennedy are the masterminds behind the adventure roller-coaster called *Congo*.

Photo: Merrick Morton



Amy provided Marshall with some new challenges. "It's unlike having a creature, like a dinosaur, who is only in relatively few scenes. Amy is with us all the time."



Photo: Barry Slobin

Oscar-winning production designer J. Michael Riva had his hands full with *Congo*. "We needed to invent a culture, which is always difficult," he explains.



Photo: Merrick Morton

"This movie is just *huge*!" exclaims Laura Linney, who, standing next to Joe Pantoliano, plays Karen Ross, the Congo mission leader who's in it up to her eyes.

to dominating the communications industry. Even though Charles and his partners send a video report that shows they've found the legendary Lost City of Zinj—nothing less than King Solomon's Mines—they don't make the follow-up report. In fact, from the scanty evidence received by TraviCom project supervisor Karen Ross (Laura Linney), it's clear that Charles and the others were all killed by...something, visible on screen only as a grey blur—with big teeth.

Meanwhile, Rumanian philanthropist Herkimer Homolka (Tim Curry) has approached Elliot, who hasn't been able to get financing to return Amy to the jungle. Homolka offers to fund the expedition—provided he can join it. The elder Travis,

hoping to hide his search for the diamonds from his rivals, has Ross join Elliot, Homolka and Peter's friend Richard (Grant Heslov) as they head into the Congo under the guidance of former mercenary Munro Kelly (Ernie Hudson).

A thrilling journey to a lost city...a hidden treasure and its bizarre, murderous guardians...volcanoes, hippos, jungle thrills, gorillas, narrow escapes and high adventure. Will audiences buy such an exotic adventure without Harrison Ford as a centerpiece?

Since this is being produced by genre veteran Kathleen Kennedy and directed by her husband, and since as producers and executive producers, they made the *Indiana Jones* films, it seems that *Congo* is probably

in good hands. They aren't carrying the ball alone: The final screenplay is by John Patrick Shanley, who wrote (among others) *Moonstruck* and the Marshall-directed *Alive*; Stan Winston is in charge of the elaborate ape FX; Michael Lantieri (who shared an Oscar with Winston for *Jurassic Park*) is doing the mechanical FX; Oscar-nominated J. Michael Riva is production designer; five-time Oscar nominee Allen Daviau is the director of photography; and the legendary Jerry Goldsmith is composing the score.

"It's an adventure picture, a thriller," says Marshall. "It has a great deal of humor, and a big ride at the end. We're trying to combine everything." On a picture of this scale—more than 120 sets, locations in Los Ange-





"There were four known expeditions in Ancient Egyptian times to the heart of Africa," Riva says. "*Congo* assumes a fifth that established [the Lost City of] Zinj."

les, Uganda and Costa Rica—there are many technical problems, but according to Marshall, there were two principal challenges. "One is, of course, having Amy, our gorilla, in every scene. It's unlike having a creature, like a dinosaur or even E.T., who is in only relatively few scenes. Amy is with us all the time; she's with us in the States, she's with us on expedition and she's with us at the end. Coordinating her was a challenge.

"Then, there's the climax of the movie; the city of Zinj is on a soundstage here, and we had to create the city. And another challenge is that there haven't been a lot of volcanoes destroying lost cities lately. We're trying for the ultimate volcano-destroying-a-lost-city movie."

## Jungle Guardians

This lost city has defenders. The distorted-looking grey gorillas are descendants of apes bred centuries before by the rulers of Zinj, who cross-bred gorillas, chimpanzees and perhaps even human beings into these highly intelligent grey monsters who live only to kill those who stumble upon the city, hidden deep in the Congo. The apes have been designed by Winston—whose on-screen credit will be "Gorillas By"—and his team, and the various stunt personnel who play them have been trained by Peter Elliott (yes, Walsh's character has the same name, with a slight spelling variation), who did gorilla "choreography" for *Greystoke* and *Gorillas in the Mist*.

After "gorilla" rehearsal, the performers return to their "handlers," the makeup FX crew who carefully install the elaborate, animatronic heads the gorilla performers will wear on camera. Christopher Swift, one of Winston's team, explains as lead grey gorilla John Alexander's gorilla head is applied. "What we're doing here is slipping the whole head on; it rests on him, and then there's a strap that tightens it and hugs it all to his face. It creates a seamless line. Then, I'll go in and do makeup around the eyes to

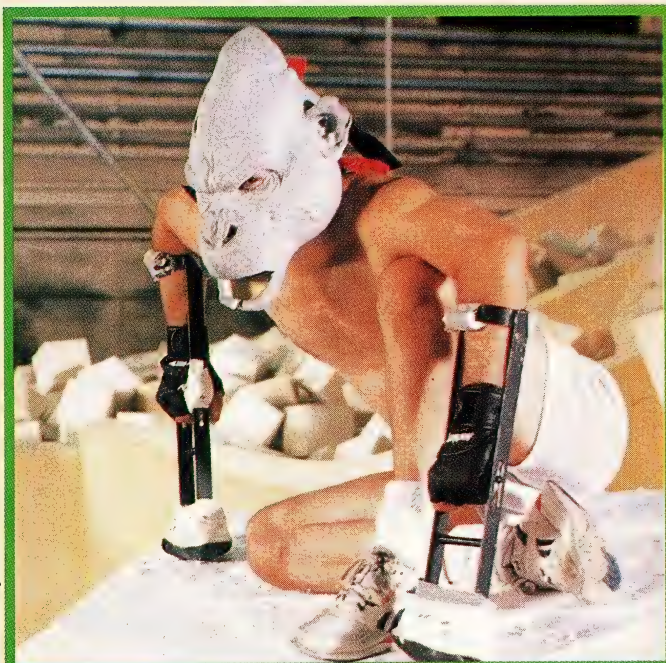
carry the coloration from his skin into the mask's skin."

The ape suits have battery compartments in the chests, as well as a radio so the actors can communicate directly with the outside world. There's another battery in the stomach that powers the head. There are arm extensions, with metal rings the actors can lean on like a crutch. The facial expressions are not run by the actors in the suits, but by off-stage personnel who have radio-control devices hanging around their necks.





Photo: Barry Slobin



The solution to the "Amy problem" was to put actors in suits. Two actresses—Lureen Noh and Misty Rojas—usually play Amy, but for stunts, Peter Elliott dons the suit.

Photo: Merrick Morton



"She is the most important aspect of this project," Winston states of Amy, the "talking" gorilla, but "in fact, you cannot train a gorilla to act."

Photo: Merrick Morton



Genre veteran Tim Curry is going to deepest Africa—really the Sony Studios lot—as Rumanian philanthropist Herkermer Homolka.

Photo: Merrick Morton



Ernie Hudson booked passage on *Congo* as Munro Kelly, the "former" mercenary who is leading the TraviCom mission into the Virunga Congo.

Because the apes are hybrids, none of them look exactly like a gorilla, or a chimpanzee, and no two of them look the same. The ears of some are big and floppy, like those of chimpanzees; others have the small, neat ears of a gorilla. The head of John Alexander's ape is long and sloping, more chimp- than gorilla-like.

At one end of the canyon is the "geode room," a circular excavation studded with diamonds; a yellow river begins here, plunging out of a circular hole high on the cave wall. The water spills over the skeletons of people luckless enough to have encountered the murderous primates. Here, Linney and Hudson's characters have entrenched them-

selves, using weapons they've found along the "trophy" hall of the grey apes. Without knowing what any of the equipment is for, the apes have stowed away whatever the ill-fated expeditions brought along, not discriminating between bagpipes and elephant guns, to the advantage of our heroes.

But now Elliot has been captured by the grey apes, and lies helpless on the canyon floor as they advance on him, ready for the kill. But wait! There's Amy to the rescue! The young female gorilla, whom Elliot has raised from infancy, leaps onto an upthrust tongue of rock—the result of a volcanic earthquake—and scampers down to help him, saying via hand signs (Amy knows a

total of 620 sign-language words) that the gorillas are bad and ugly, and should go away. She cradles Elliot's head in her lap, and signs "Mother."

Thankfully, the audience will hear what Amy's signing. On Amy's back is a computer with a loudspeaker that translates her hand signals into audible words. This device is unlikely in the real world but necessary for the movie: no one has to wearily translate every word she "says."

For the leap down the rock, Peter Elliott—the real one—has donned the Amy suit himself; he does most of the character's stunts. The rest of the time, Amy is played by either Lureen Noh or Misty Rojas; when one



"It's nice to work with people who are good at their work," says Hudson, here about to ride herd on a gaggle of killer hippos.



Photo: Merrick Morton

Even though *Congo* is a jungle adventure, the trademark Michael Crichton techno-trickery rears its head in the climax.

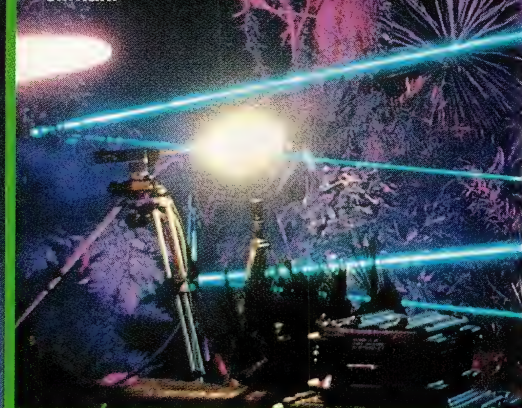


Photo: Merrick Morton

is in the costume, the other is on the set, reading Amy's "lines" aloud.

"We have a cable on Peter for the jump; we're doing a cable-removal shot, where we fly him down safely onto the rock," explains

"We're working in about every scene, building props, constructing effective grey gorillas, and assisting Stan Winston once again in controlling the creatures. But believe it or not, the toughest thing on this entire picture

"There's a reality factor with Amy," Winston continues, "so she is the most important aspect of this project. She is the heart of the movie, she's the central character, and in fact, you cannot train a gorilla to act. We

Photo: Merrick Morton

Although *Congo* is a movie about "man against nature," Marshall chose to use man-made nature to film the hippo sequences.

Michael Lantieri of the stunt. "We'll optically remove the cable in postproduction, so it looks like he's doing the spectacular jump on his own." This is, of course, only one of Lantieri's many tasks on the film. "On this set, we have wind and rain, and these air-driven stone spikes that thrust upward through the ground."

The earthquake, resulting from a volcanic eruption, also wreaks havoc with the Lost City of Zinj. "Our pavilion over in Zinj, which weighs in at about five tons, had to be built for use as a set and to collapse on cue. We used explosive bolts and high explosives to collapse it all a few weeks ago. There, we're doing fork-lift removal. We tilt a slab using a fork-lift that's right in front of the camera, but we're taking it out in post. We've invented a new credit: Digital Fork-lift Removal Supervisor," Lantieri jokes.

## Jungle Makers

There is even more, in terms of volume, for Lantieri's mechanical FX team to do in *Congo* than there was in *Jurassic Park*. "It's a high-volume picture for us," Lantieri says.

for us has been, and will continue to be, the use of lava. You're dealing with fluids, fire, things that cannot be done in miniature and can't really be done safely and as large as you want full-size. We're trying to develop a way to do lava that has never been done before and, hopefully, not embarrass ourselves.

"We can come up with stuff that pours and looks like lava, but it's not hot. If we use something hot that burns like lava, then it doesn't flow like lava. We're using all known technologies—some traditional optical FX and some CGI. And in addition, we're incorporating traditional miniatures."

For FX maestro Winston, "The biggest problem was that Amy, the female adolescent gorilla who has to carry this movie as a principal character from start to finish, has to be unrecognizable as anything other than a real adolescent mountain gorilla. With the grey gorillas, we have a little bit more leeway. They are mutations, fantasy apes, and that leaves our creative imaginations free to come up with the cinematic reality of this particular ape.

now have a performing gorilla who takes direction from Frank Marshall, and interacts with the rest of the cast members."

Lantieri and Winston decided early on not to use any real apes, and to avoid robots. "It made no sense to do animatronic figures," Winston claims. "To try to get full, moving performances on a show of this scope with complete animatronics would have made no sense. Rick Baker has broken ground; he did wonderful things with the apes in *Greystoke* and *Gorillas in the Mist*; it has been proven that you can create the illusion of an ape with a person in a suit, and you can do it really well." Winston was first approached to do the film back in 1987. When Kennedy and Marshall acquired the rights later, Kennedy approached Winston while they were working on *Jurassic Park*—and now here he is, riding herd over a gaggle of gorillas.

Production designer Riva had his own difficulty, primarily in creating the Lost City of Zinj. "We needed to invent a culture, which is always difficult," he says. "We borrowed certain aspects of different cultures and put them together, so that we would have







a distinctly African feeling, but with a very strong Egyptian influence. The idea is that the pharaohs originally discovered the mines, then bequeathed them to the kingdom of Solomon." There were four known expe-



Photo: Merrick Morton

"I can't believe what Frank is dealing with every day, and how well he has taken on this task," Linney relates of her director.



ditions in Ancient Egyptian times to the heart of Africa; *Congo* assumes a fifth that found the mines and established Zinj.

"What was unusual about this picture is that I was allowed to participate in the formation of the script," Riva says, "so a lot of stuff that happens in the movie came from research that derived from our department. I would go to Frank and Kathy with that information, and they would get very excited about it and try to incorporate it in the script. We would actually sit down, all of us plus the writer, and see how we could incorporate some of these fabulous little tidbits."

## Jungle Runners

Once the design and script were in place, and Winston's team was hand-knotting every hair on the gorilla costumes, the cast was hired. Walsh was pleased to be cast as Peter Elliot. "It's a big movie, and I would be an idiot to say that's not an attractive thing," the actor admits. "These people are known for making big, fun movies, and I would like to be a part of that. But I also have to say, like every actor will tell you, I liked the charac-

ter. Thank God he's interesting, because it's not enough to come to work every day just knowing this is a big movie.

"It's work and it has to have meaning and value—it's my whole life. I want to be an actor and I want to be a *successful* actor. The fun is just being here, being part of it. The most fun, I guess, would be the scenes with Laura Linney, because that's where the most acting took place."

Linney exclaims, "This movie is just *huge*!" She then laughs long and loud. "I can't believe what Frank is dealing with every day, and how well he has taken on this task, to have so many different departments. I think he's doing a great job. He has to keep everything balanced; he can't let anyone feel as though they're being left out."

**Bruce Campbell didn't land the lead in *Congo*, but he got to go to Costa Rica anyway in a secondary role.**



Photo: Barry Slobin

**Marshall had his crew design an entire jungle set on a soundstage, to provide the director the greatest amount of control.**

Like Walsh, she adds that one of the best things about the film for her was working with the cast. As the cast of *Jurassic Park* did, those in *Congo* have become friends off the set as well.

Hudson is no stranger to big productions, having been part of *Ghostbusters* and *No Escape*, and he's pleased to be in a big film again. "This is a big-budget FX piece.

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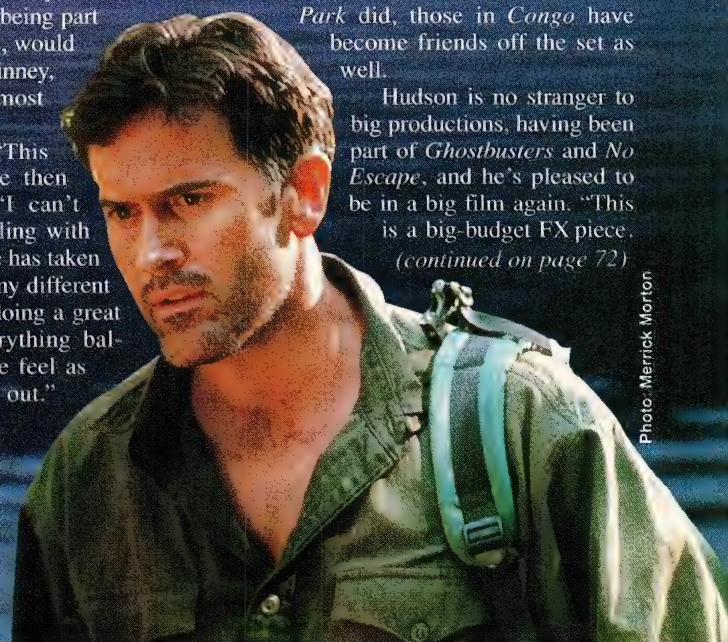


Photo: Merrick Morton



# LESSONS OF LIFE

Cyborg tutor Sullivan Walker tries to teach values on Earth 2.

By CRAIG W. CHRISSINGER

**Y**ale was a special kind of human being—even before he was enhanced,” comments Sullivan Walker about the seemingly wise, part-man, part-machine teacher and family confidant he portrays on TV’s *Earth 2*. “He was committed to a cause and to improving the condition of life on the space station where he lived. He’s a completely passionate man, who is the ultimate friend and who believes in a cause.

“It’s interesting to play someone with so much knowledge and experience. I like playing characters that I have to reach for. I mean, I would love to be more disciplined, make better decisions and be better at what



Photo: Richard Twarog

As the last of the Yale series of cyborgs, Sullivan Walker stands by the side of Devon Adair (Debrah Farentino) on her long trek across *Earth 2*.



Photo: Steve Schapiro All Earth 2 Photos: Copyright 1994, 1995 NBC, Inc





Photo: Richard Tawog

encyclopedic knowledge to serve as tutors. Unfortunately, the Yale series had to be recalled when their mind wipes began to fail and they became violent. The Yale of *Earth 2* is the last of his kind, saved by a young Devon, who argued with her parents to keep him.

## Enhanced Humans

As the series has progressed, so has the definition of exactly what Yale is. In "Better Living Through Morganite," Devon tells Morgan that Yale is a "human being with peripheral enhancements" and not a cyborg. Walker explains, "It's a process of evolution. We've arrived at the point now where we say Yale is human, but he *has* been enhanced. His arm projects holograms and he uses it as a teaching tool. He has a computer chip in his brain and access to all the worthwhile information in the world.

"A teacher is someone who prepares one for life."

"On a personal level, everything Devon has learned, she learned from Yale. And now he's tutoring her son. One thing that's important to me about Yale is that he seems to be very committed to the idea of saving this young man and, in so doing, obviously saving humanity. He's committed to Devon's dream, and that's a carryover from his days before he was considered a criminal."

Walker, a Trinidad native who came to this country in 1968, is contemplative

about playing a man who has had his memories erased. "One of the things I realized as I was reading a script recently is that this guy is called 'Yale,' but that's not really his name," the actor comments. "There were lots of Yales and he's just *one* of them. I knew that before, but had never really thought about it. It made me realize that here's a man who, despite the kind of human being he was, is living in a society where he has no identity. He doesn't even know his own name. He has to find out who he was.

"Identity and knowing who you are are very important. That's what I've gotten from growing up in the Caribbean. Culture, where you come from, who you are, what you eat, the way you talk and the things you believe in—those things make you who you are. Your past is important and you need to understand it to have some kind of guide to the future. It's interesting playing a character like him because I think there are many people who are still trying to find out who they are."

Revelations of Yale's past are addressed

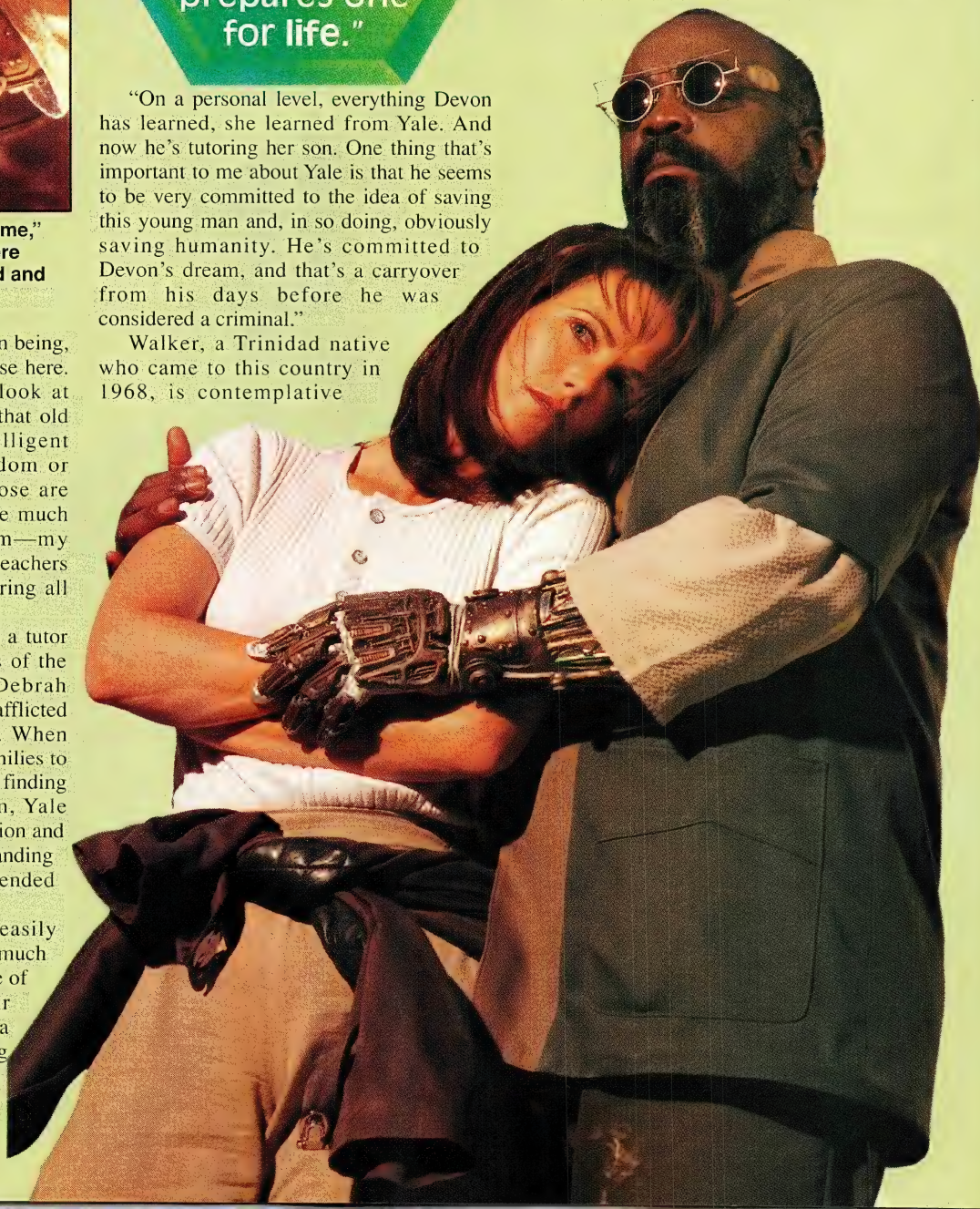
**"He doesn't even know his own name," explains Walker. The Yale series were criminals whose minds were wiped and enhanced with a computer chip.**

I do. If I could be that kind of human being, then I would have served my purpose here. It's a stretch, and I sometimes look at myself as Yale and think, 'Who's that old man saying all those wise, intelligent things?' If people see any wisdom or presence in my performance, those are things I got from people who were much greater and wiser than I am—my grandfather and grandmother, my teachers and the people who loved me. I bring all that love into my acting."

In the series, Yale has served as a tutor and true friend to two generations of the Adair family, first to Devon (Debrah Farentino) and now her Syndrome-afflicted son, Ulysses (Joey Zimmerman). When Devon decides to lead a group of families to colonize a distant planet in hopes of finding a cure for all their sick children, Yale accompanies her without any hesitation and remains faithful even after a crash landing thousands of miles from their intended destination.

While a mechanical left arm easily identifies Yale as a cyborg, there is much more beneath the surface. Yale is one of a group of criminals who had their memories washed and replaced by a tiny computer chip containing

**"I want Yale to be a teacher of values," relates Walker.**







He taught Devon all she knows, and Yale is also passing on his vast knowledge to her son Ulysses (Joey Zimmerman).

in "Better Living Through Morganite" as his true memories begin to return. In one flashback, Yale sees himself and others in paramilitary uniforms going down a corridor and confronting a group aboard a space station. A woman pleads for sanctuary and says they are unarmed, even as the uniformed men aim their rifles. Later, the Terrian-raised Mary (Kelli Williams) helps Yale to realize the truth of his part in this confrontation between scientists and Elite Services officers.

Despite the importance that Walker places on identity as "Croy," he is not eager to know all about Yale's life before the mind wipe. "One of the things about how I work is that I tend *not* to want to know too much beforehand. The background issue is up in the air as to whether Yale was really a criminal or not, and I don't know. Maybe it was just political, but he thinks he was a criminal. His concern is what kind of human being he was in the past, and whether he harmed people or caused pain. I prefer to play him as a man who's trying to find himself and who he really is. That causes him a great deal of concern, because his memory has been erased. It gives me many directions in which to go. Really, I don't want to know. I just want good scripts to sink my teeth into."

Walker has to look no farther than himself when it comes to inspiration in portraying a "master educator," having taught school in Trinidad and New York while acting at night. "My grandparents were my role models, but teachers were

really the ones who made me believe I possibly could do great things and

transcend the poverty in which I grew up. Teaching is a marvelous profession, and it exposed me to books, ideas and interaction with other human beings. It taught me how to care and about responsibility. It was a little scary, but it opened up the world to me."

## Enhanced Teaching

Teaching values and not just facts is an important element of education to Walker, and one he tries to inject into Yale's lessons to True Danziger and Uly. "One of the things I noticed in the 'Morganite' script was that Yale was reciting facts about the pilgrims, Christopher Columbus and whatever. What's the point in that? To me, a teacher is someone who prepares one for *life*. So, I said to Carol Flint [co-creator and executive producer], 'If I'm going to teach the children, I want to teach them values. I want to give them an education to help them exist within their environment.' I don't want to give them facts just for the sake of giving them facts. So, in the episode, when I am teaching, it's constructed in such a way that it is about values. I'm talking about co-existing, and the ability to communicate and share.

Even if I'm teaching a lesson about Columbus, for me that lesson must be about what we can learn from it. I want Yale to be a teacher of values."

In some ways, the colonists also look upon Yale as a sort of spiritual guide, having him conduct ceremonies and serve as confessor. "Much of that has to do with

"Yale has a sadness to him because he understands that human beings seem to be continuing to make the same mistakes," explains Walker.



CRAIG W. CHRISSINGER, veteran *STARLOG* correspondent, profiled Rebecca Gayheart in issue #214.





Even Walker doesn't know what secret crimes may lurk in his character's dark past.

the kind of man he probably was before," Walker remarks. "I'm not sure he's so much a spiritual leader because he can pull up a prayer from his storehouse of information. He knows everything about religion, but beyond that, if he comes across as a man who cares or who is prepared to listen, that's the kind of man he was before. All he has now is additional information.

"Yale has a sadness to him because he understands that human beings seem to be continuing to make the same mistakes. We lived on the space stations because we corrupted and exploited Earth. In 'Better Living Through Morganite,' we deal with greed and the whole issue of acceptance of the beings that live on this planet. Some of these things caused Earth to fall. There are so many problems in our world, and we become richer humans when we take the time to understand each other's culture. If we decide to go beyond obvious perceptions and really get into people's souls, Earth would be a better place."

At the same time, Walker believes the tutor can be a character of hope. "Despite the recognition that we still make the same mistakes, I don't want him to just be sad. I'm trying to inject Yale with a sense of optimism. There's a simple line in the pilot where Devon is looking for her son, she's worried and Yale is sitting with her. He simply tells her, 'We'll find him.' It doesn't sound like much, but that kind of support and giving of hope is an important character element of Yale, too."

Mention of that scene in the two-hour premiere reminds the actor of the varying relationships Yale has with the other characters. "One of the wonderful things about Yale's relationship with Devon is that he backs her up," he observes. "He stands with her. He has left his home and gone across the galaxy to another planet just to help her. He has something of an intellectual relationship with Julia, the doctor. The relationship with the children is obviously very warm. Yale and Danziger

have become sort of friends, but distant ones. And the writers have created some nice situations for Bess and me. Bess confesses to him, and talks of marriage and personal things. The show really is about relationships between people who have different experiences, educational backgrounds and such. They've found a way to bond together and they have one objective in mind, which is to find New Pacifica."

## Enhanced Prospects

Walker originally left his native Trinidad at age 27 because "I had this burning passion to be in show business. I didn't want to just do acting as a hobby—I wanted to live it. The classroom became too small a world for me. I wanted to learn more and be open to other ideas, so I moved away from teaching. I've gone beyond my wildest dreams, because I was only interested in stage work at first."

It was in 1985 that he landed a small but well-received role in "Croccodile" *Dundee* while working on a play in New York. At first, Walker was reluctant to take the part, but the film ultimately taught him a lesson. "I'm only in the last five minutes, but it made me realize the power of the camera," he remembers. "Suddenly, I couldn't go anywhere without being recognized for a five-minute scene. I like the power that film has to entertain and at least make someone think about situations. That was my first major film and I decided I wanted to do more."

"In terms of movie roles, it has been a slow process, because there are not a lot of black men in film who talk like I do. People don't know what to make of me. I've been told that I sound too exotic, too British, too intelligent and other things. Well, times are changing and people are becoming more sophisticated. Producers are being made to recognize that all black people don't sound alike. I just want to do the best possible work I can do, and have the opportunity to

succeed or fail," Walker observes.

Other roles the actor is proud to mention include a scuba-diving shop owner who assists Tom Cruise in *The Firm* and the recurring character Dr. Harmon on *The Cosby Show*. "I worked with Bill Cosby when his show was number one," he remarks. "He cast me to play his best friend, with my accent and all. He just told me to make my character the kind of doctor that any parent would want to take their child to see."

While Walker would like to work in the theater again, it would have to be something special. "I would like to do theater that is meaningful. I don't know what form that will take, maybe producing my own thing. I did Broadway and it was a wonderful experience. Theater is my first love, of course, and I would love to do it again, but it has to be special and meaningful."

Shooting mostly outdoors in New Mexico on *Earth 2* has been an enjoyable experience for Walker. "It has been cold at times and hot at times, but it has never been a drag. It's exciting to be out in the open, look at the sky, contemplate the mountains and feel the breeze and heat against your body. I like it and it has been wonderful to be outdoors, watching the Sun set and the sand blow.

"I've done so many things on this show that I've never done before. I've been shot, I've chopped wood and I've had to do things that you don't do on stage. You get into something like this, and you have to take chances and test your courage. I had to bang my hand against a tree repeatedly. After the scene, my hand was swollen and I had scratches all over. But there was a kind of pleasure to that. I'll take the bruises. I can't drive, but they made me drive on this show and there's no way to fake that. To be an actor, one has to be able to take chances, within reason, and fly blind if it gets the job done."

Walker, who enjoys writing plays and short stories, has had an interest in science fiction for some time. "I like the way science fiction challenges my imagination, and makes me wonder and speculate about life. I come from a culture that believes in mystery and magic, and sometimes there's magic in science fiction. Without magic, what is life? So, I like that about science fiction, and I like the magic we are creating on this show."

For Sullivan Walker, perhaps the greatest lesson of *Earth 2* is for people to respect each other and the planet. "Maybe at some point, we're going to run out of space if we don't take care. It seems like man has been moving for one reason or another since the beginning of time—whether from political or religious persecution or famine or whatever—and expanding his horizons. Maybe that's why we don't really seem to care about our environment. There's the thought that we can keep moving someplace else. Maybe *Earth 2* can teach us how to respect the Earth." ★



# BATMAN'S BATMAN

By BILL WARREN

**Y**ou probably know the face: long, rectangular, a wide forehead, a wide mouth, with narrow eyes that can range from icy cold to meltingly warm. A very British face. And you probably know the voice, too: trained, cultured, deceptively gentle. Michael Gough has been making movies since the late 1940s; he's usually in character roles, often as sadistic villains.

From the late '50s through the early '70s, he was one of the most frequent horror movie stars in England, third in popularity and importance only to Christopher Lee and

Peter Cushing—both of whom he appeared with from time to time. Gough tends to dismiss his horror roles and to not always remember much about them, but he's aware that they're what led to his recurring part in one of the biggest, most expensive series of movies ever made.

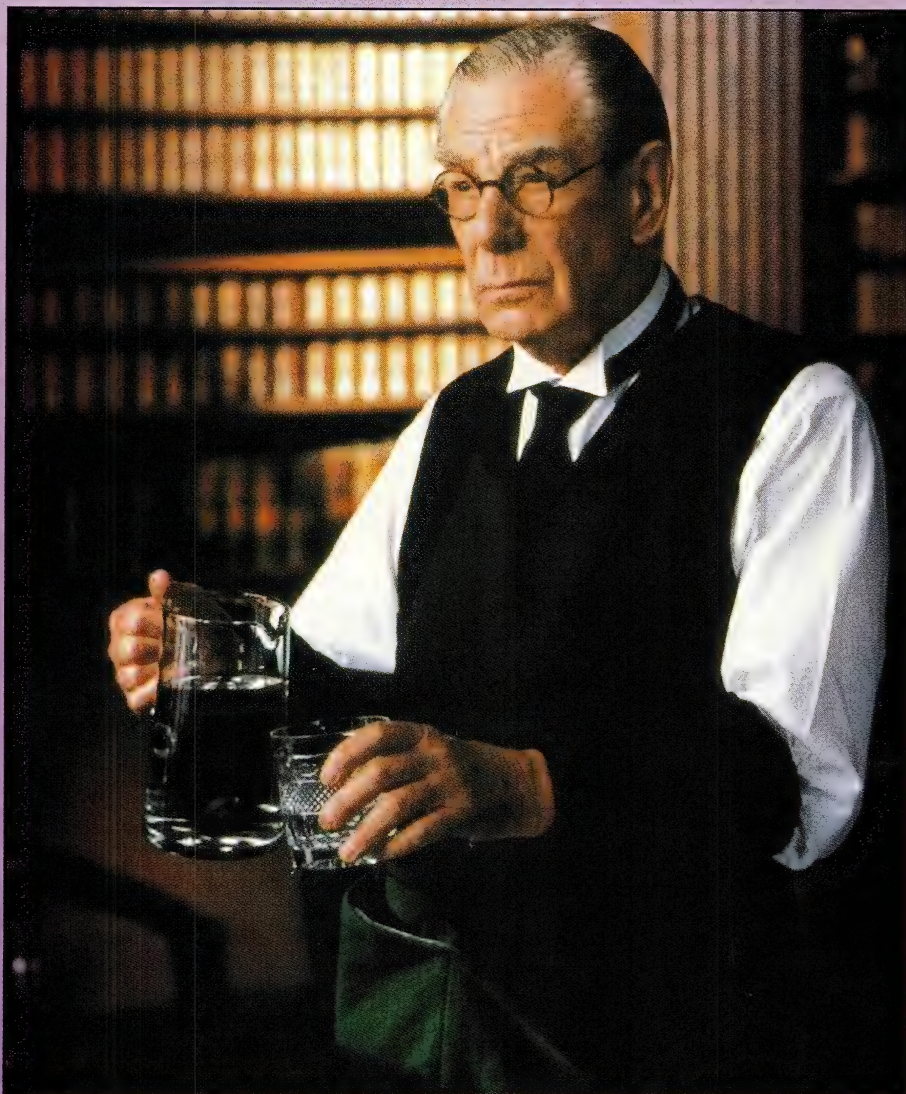
He's Alfred Pennyworth in the *Batman* movies, returning to the role again in *Batman Forever*, butler to a new Bruce Wayne/Batman, Val Kilmer. Amusingly enough, he based Batman's butler in part on—a batman. "A guy I knew," Gough says,

"had been a batman—a servant in the British army—to a major-general or someone like that. After the major general retired, the batman retired too, and after the major-general died, the batman stayed on, looking after the wife and taking care of them all.

"He even went to a cookery school for young ladies, and there was this seasoned old soldier, with an apron on, learning to cook with a whole lot of debutante ladies; rich parents send their daughters to learn how to cook. And here's this old character, doing it all. His entire life was wound up with this family."

Just as, of course, Alfred's life is wound up with Bruce Wayne. In the first *Batman*, one of the most pleasant scenes featured him sitting in the kitchen, warmly reminiscing about young Master Bruce with Vicki Vale (Kim Basinger). Reminded of this scene,

**As butler & confidant, genre veteran Michael Gough once again serves the Dark Knight.**



All *Batman Forever* Photos: Ralph Nelson/Copyright 1995 DC Comics Inc.





**According to Gough, "Val [Kilmer] and Michael [Keaton] are very different, but the relationship we have is the same: Alfred and Bruce are very good friends."**

Gough is very curious to know how it played with audiences, and is happy to learn that it's so well-liked.

"I think *Batman needs Alfred*," Gough speculates, "because he's sort of the White Cliffs of Dover. There would be nothing to return to England for if the White Cliffs of Dover weren't there. Alfred is *home* for Batman; Alfred is there. He shines the shoes, he

does the cooking—he does everything in the whole house, as far as I can make out. He's essential."

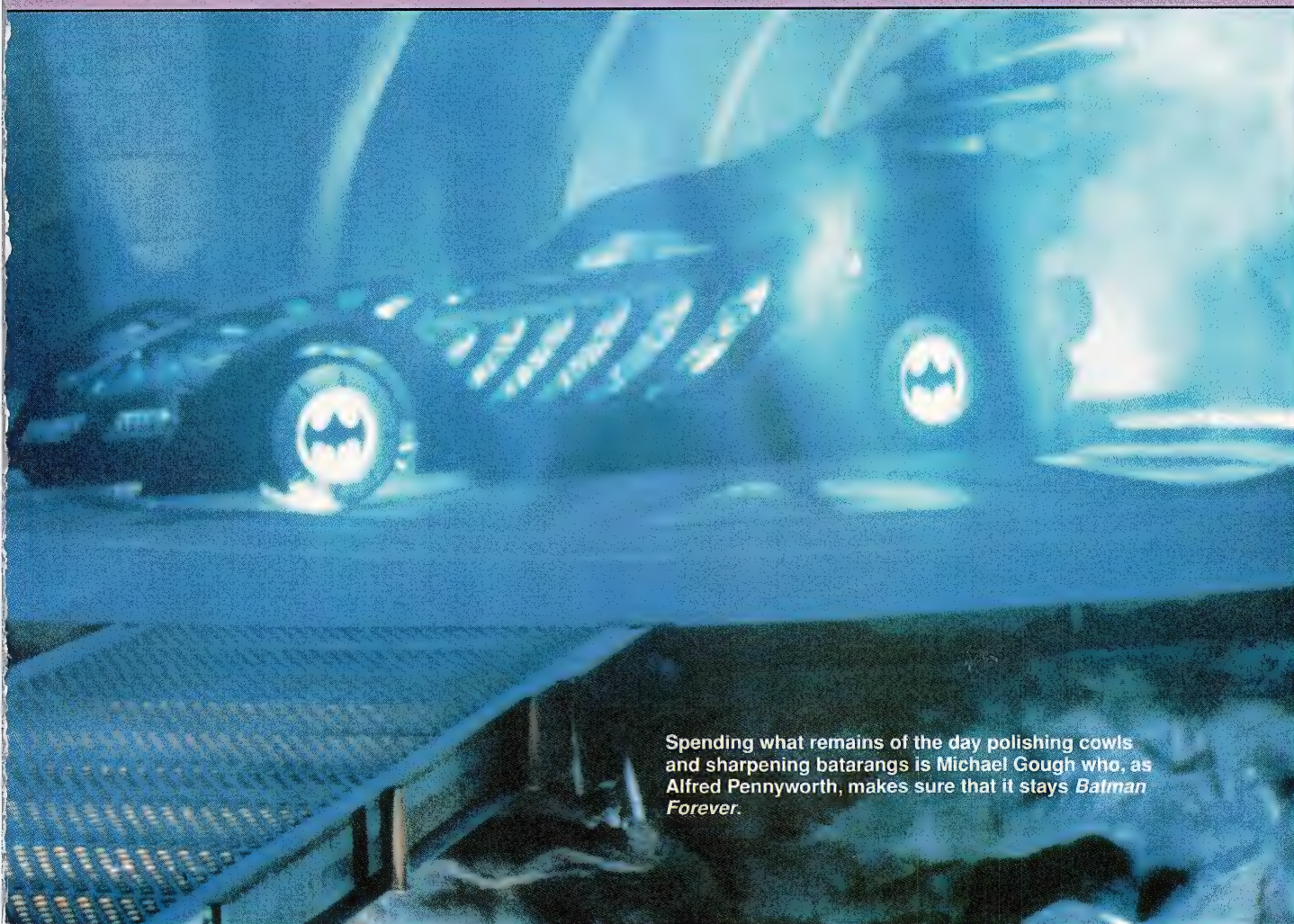
Clearly that's the case so far. Alfred is reliable, the perfect butler to both Bruce Wayne and Batman, deferential but caring to both sides of his master's dual identity. But there's more, of course. "Alfred needs Batman," Gough claims, "because he's family.

Alfred's entire life is wound up with Bruce Wayne, just as that of the Batman I mentioned was wound up with the family of his major-general. Alfred is the only family Bruce Wayne has now, and Bruce is the only family Alfred has. Bruce's mother and father are dead—Alfred is it. They are very, very close in a way, but still very much master and servant. I'm careful to always remember that, and I don't overstep the mark."

## Bright Knight

There are new elements, of course, in *Batman Forever*. Joel Schumacher has taken over as director from Tim Burton, and Val Kilmer has donned the cape and cowl instead of Michael Keaton. And now there's also Robin/Dick Grayson, in the person of Chris O'Donnell, to contend with. "The interesting thing," Gough points out, "is that with Chris O'Donnell I play the scenes we didn't see in the first two. I brought up Batman when he was a lad, you see, and now I'm working with Dick Grayson when *he's* a lad. I'm really filling in the scenes that I didn't play with Michael Keaton in the first two films." In other words, moviegoers get to see, at least briefly, how Alfred brings up a young man.

Kilmer and Keaton are "very different indeed. I had worked with Val before, in *Top Secret*. It was like old friends meeting up, so that was good. On the first film, I got to know Michael before we started work; I



Spending what remains of the day polishing cowl and sharpening batarangs is Michael Gough who, as Alfred Pennyworth, makes sure that it stays *Batman Forever*.





used to go down and meet with him at the studio, and we met at his hotel, so by the time we started shooting, we knew each other. We got on very well. Val and Michael are very different, but the relationship we have is the same: Alfred and Bruce are very good friends."

However, the relationship he has as Alfred to Bruce Wayne remains the same whether Bruce's wearing the expensive Italian suits or the Dark Knight garb. "When I'm talking to Bruce Wayne," Gough says, "I don't think, 'Oh my word, you are different,' or, for that matter, 'You are the same.' Bruce Wayne is not an actor, after all; he is Alfred's employer."

Similarly, Gough finds a bit of difficulty comparing Schumacher to Burton as a director. He is quite enthusiastic about Schumacher. "He's wonderful, and it's so nice to be able to say it and really mean it. He's very, very good. He's my friend; he's a friend of everybody on the set. He's very amusing, very funny, and still very serious about the work. He's just the sort of director every actor dreams of."

Asked to compare the two, Gough begs off, on the apparent assumption that he's being asked to rate the directorial abilities of the two men. He does admit, however, that they're totally different. "I think Burton is

more serious, but he gets very excited about the whole thing, about the work he's doing. He has been down to the set of this film; he's lovely, and we all get on very well together."

Gough feels that the tone of this adventure is probably going to be lighter than the last two, "Though of course, I haven't seen it

**"I've got an  
intelligent face, and  
nothing between the  
ears at all."**

yet." Alfred still doesn't have any scenes with the villains, exactly: "I get thumped on my head by the villains, that's all." However, there are more scenes overall with Alfred than in the first two pictures, he feels. "It's a rounder part than it was before, but he's still Alfred," Gough laughs.

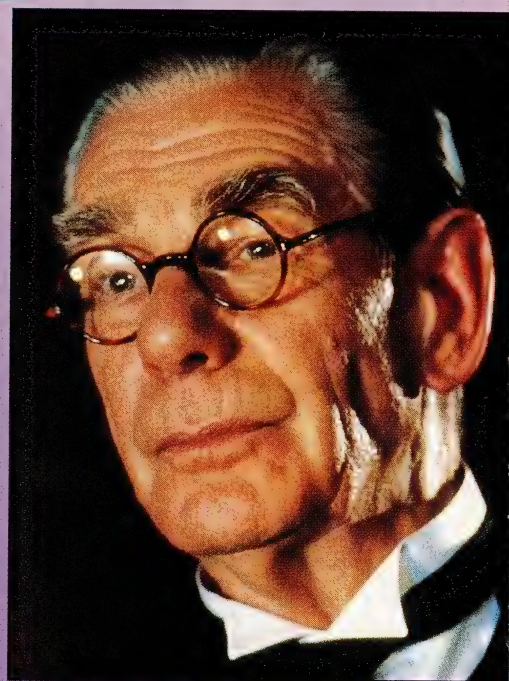
With each successive Bat-movie, fans not only see more of Wayne Manor, but areas previously unseen, and that trend continues in *Batman Forever*. "The sets have been different each time," Gough points out, "and they are different again. They keep a Gothic kind of look to it. I think you do see more of the interior of Wayne Manor, bedrooms, sitting rooms, stairs."

Gough wasn't exactly the expected casting choice for the role of Alfred; his selection surprised moviegoers the world over,

even those who have always liked him as an actor. It even surprised Gough. "Nobody else would have thought of it except Tim Burton," he surmises, "and Tim thought of it because he had seen me in the horror films."

And what does he think of playing this role? "I love it. I think Alfred is a very good man, a very caring guy, the sort of person who's very close to my heart in a way. He has a lovely sense of humor, in a quiet way. I think there's something of the nanny in me, and this brought it out. I've had a lot of children, a lot of grandchildren and in a way, it's an extension of all that," he concludes.

Despite the worldwide popularity of the *Batman* movies, Gough is rarely recognized as Alfred. "I'm recognized for other things, like the episode of *Inspector Morse*



**"I am a featured supporting player," Gough explains, "and that's just what I'm happy being."**

that was shown the other day; many people gave me a hello and all that, but they don't recognize me as Batman's batman. I'm pleased to say that they don't."

## Great Pretender

Gough is, like most actors, a shy man at heart, so public recognition embarrasses him. But like most actors too, he remembers the more baroque instances of recognition. "I was on top of a bus in London when I got a tap on the shoulder. The guy said to me, 'It is, isn't it?' I said, 'What are you talking about?' He said, 'Well you are, aren't you?' I suddenly realized what he was on about. I said, 'Yes, that's it.' He turned around and shouted to someone in the back of the bus. 'Yes, it is, it is him.' He turned back to me. 'What's your name?' I said, 'Peter Cushing.' He shouts, 'I told you, it's Pete, old Pete Cushing.' I scampered down the stairs and was off the bus with great speed."

*BILL WARREN, veteran STARLOG correspondent, is the author of Keep Watching the Skies Volumes 1 & 2 (\$45, \$49.95). He previewed Species in issue #214.*



He admits his unusual last name, which really rhymes with "off," may have given some people pause before they approached him. And he's heard all the variations. "I've heard Michael Goo, Michael Gow, and so on, but the best one was 'Michael Gup.' I assume that was because the word spelled 'hiccough' is pronounced 'hiccup.' So someone called me 'Mike Gup.'"

Over the years, Michael Gow Goo Gup Gough has worked steadily, more so than those on the western side of the Atlantic might realize, because he's as busy on stage and television as in films. He even appeared, many years apart, in two sets of episodes of *Doctor Who*. He found the first, "The Celestial Toymaker," to be "very hard work, very difficult indeed. I had to remember all these numbers. I played someone called the Celestial Toymaker, and had to remember all these

and I never passed a single exam in my life, so I thought I would never earn a living. What was I going to do? But you buy a stick of number nine and a stick of number five makeup, and there, you are an actor. To tell the truth though, I do remember. I saw a play—I think it was called *Sailors Don't Care*, a wonderful light comedy—and it starred Rex Harrison. I thought that's what I wanted to be, that guy! Years later, Rex became a great mate. I told him this, and he said, 'That's ridiculous! We're of an age!' I said, 'No, we're not. You were a grown-up actor, and I was still in school. We can't be of an age.' 'Bloody lies!' he said." (Harrison was born in 1908, Gough in 1917.)

His desire to be an actor led to an unusual institution for it: Wye Agricultural College. "I was trying to get work in the theater, and I couldn't get any work. I worked in

down at the docks. Children came out of school and got everybody's autograph—the lights, the stagehands, everybody's—except Alec Guinness, who was sitting there on a crate watching the autographs being collected. He was amused."

## Character Guy

Even while appearing in mainstream movies like *The Go-Between*, *The Dresser* and *Out of Africa*, Gough has been busy in the field of horror and SF movies. He was Arthur Holmwood in the classic *Horror of Dracula* in 1958, and went on to appear in many others: *Horrors of the Black Museum*, *Konga*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *No Place Like Homicide*, *Black Zoo*—his favorite, because he got to work with a lot of animals—*Dr. Terror's House of Horrors*, *The Skull*, *They Came From Beyond Space*,



Dracula Photo: Copyright 1958 Hammer Films

Gough has fond memories of his *Horror of Dracula* co-star, the late Peter Cushing. "You never will hear an unkind word about him."

ridiculous numbers! I was doing a play at the time, so that made it harder to learn the lines—it was torture. I couldn't look at the show myself, you see, but someone saw it. I told them how much pain it was, and they said, 'It didn't show. You looked absolutely confident. You come out with all the numbers.' " Gough sighs. "Someone will write them down someday, and find out I was all wrong."

He actually doesn't remember the later *Doctor Who* he appeared in anywhere near as well. "I just cannot remember. Someone sent me a list of my films, and asked me to add the ones not on the list. There were more than 80 films. And that was three years ago, and I've done quite a number since then. And there has been a lot of theater and television. I've got a very simple brain: I've got an intelligent face, and nothing between the ears at all." Perhaps that's why the scientists Gough has played have tended to be mad.

His initial desire to be an actor, he says, came from two drives. "I fancied actresses,



All Batman Returns Photos: Copyright 1992 DC Comics Inc.

"I think [Tim] Burton is more serious," says Gough, comparing Burton (on desk) to Joel Schumacher. "But he gets very excited about the whole thing."

shops and things like that, and the only time I had off was at lunchtime, so of course when I went to see agents at that time, they were out to lunch. So, I had my sandwich in the agent's outer office.

"A friend who knew about rubber plantations said I should go to an agricultural college, then I could go out and rubber-plant. I thought it would be nice to go to an agricultural college and get some fresh air, so I went to Wye Agricultural College for a year."

Fortunately for Gough, the great actress Edith Evans was a friend of his mother's. "She had a house near the college, quite near, so I used to hitch hike over and meet her—and that's where I first met Alec Guinness."

Later on, they became good friends. "I was a student at the Old Vic school, and Alec was a small-part actor. He used to call me McGough, and I called him McGuinness; when he was knighted, he became McSir." Gough is somewhat envious of Guinness' ability to almost completely vanish when he's offstage. "When we were doing *The Horse's Mouth*, which Alec wrote but Ronald Neame directed, we were on location

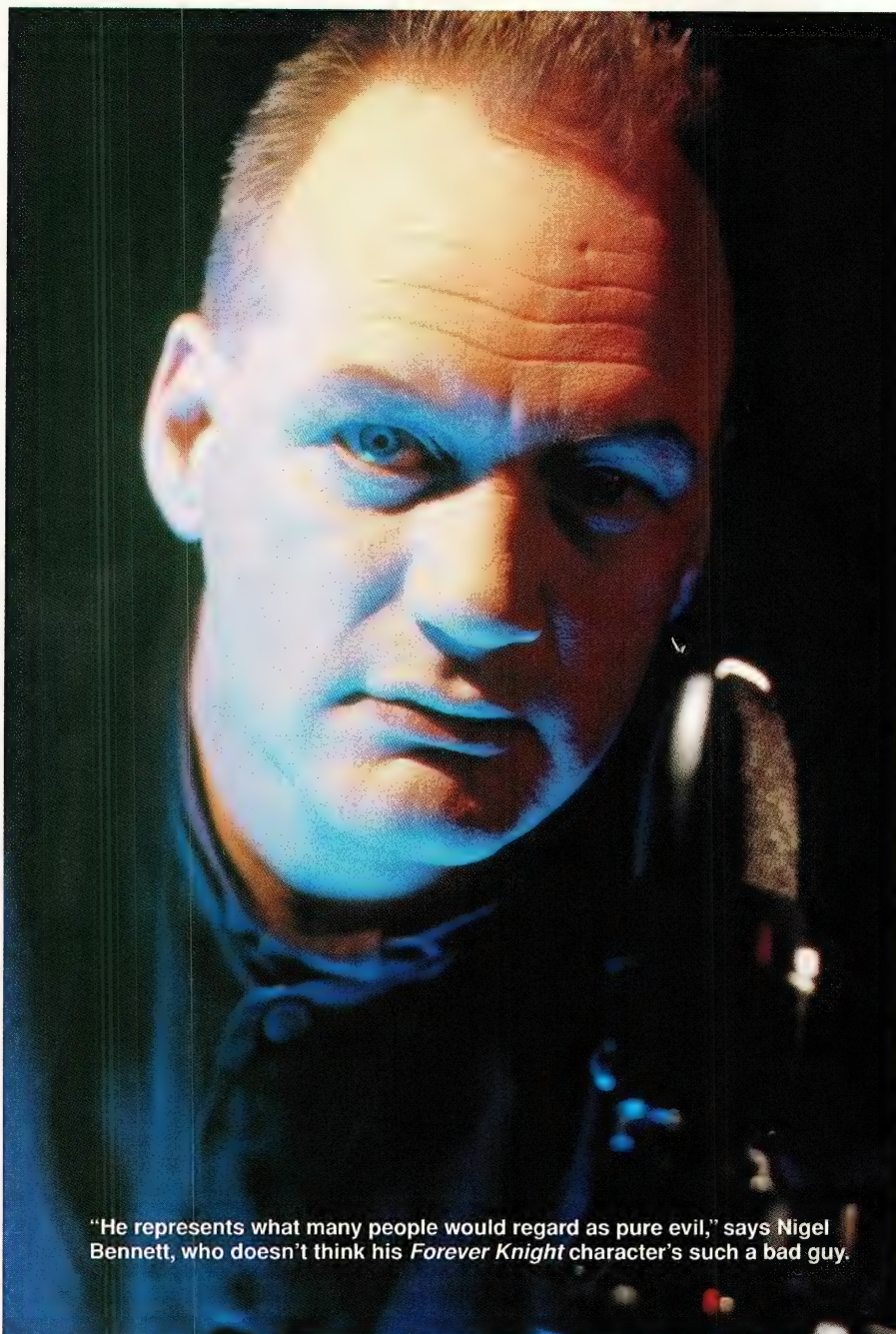
*Berserk!*, *The Crimson Cult*, *Trog*, *Crucible of Horror*, *Horror Hospital*, *The Boys from Brazil*, *The Legend of Hell House* (in an unbilled cameo) and *Satan's Slave*, his last low-budget horror movie to date, released in 1977.

In most of these, he was the leading villain, often giving very colorful, broad performances, resulting in his sometimes being referred to as "the British Vincent Price"—which may be why Price fan Tim Burton cast Gough as Alfred in the first place. Gough says, "I don't know if I was the British Vincent Price, but the roles were larger than life. In a funny way, when you're really doing rubbish—I don't mean rubbish, but things that are hard to believe—you have to work hard to make people believe it. There's a sort of trick to it."

His work in these films brought him into contact with Cushing and Christopher Lee, of course. Lee, Gough says, "is incredible. I seem to remember if you were talking about Italy, he would say, 'Yes, when I was singing in Milan...' or 'When I was a policeman in Africa...' And he has really done all these

(continued on page 72)





"He represents what many people would regard as pure evil," says Nigel Bennett, who doesn't think his *Forever Knight* character's such a bad guy.

**Forever working nights, Nigel Bennett doesn't believe being a vampire villain makes one a bad person.**

**By PETER BLOCH-HANSEN**

really has a directness which is refreshing in these days of political correctness and bending over backwards to say the right thing at the right time. It's nice to play someone who doesn't care about that and doesn't have to.

"He makes me laugh a lot of the time. He has a great sense of humor. When some policeman is threatening him with interrogation, he just says, 'Oh, try.' Also, he has this aristocratic view of life. I like this. Why would he be into anything else? Why should he not want the best after being alive for nearly 2,000 years?

"I would like him to become more central to the action. When my agent first sent me scripts for the role, I read the script for episode two and was on the phone straight-away saying, 'What the heck are you talking about? This man's dead at the end of the second episode. How can he possibly be a series regular?' Then, they explained it to me. The vampires are always the backstory in each episode and the front story is always the cops. I personally would like it to be the other way around. I would like to see more of the flashbacks and more about the few hundred years when they actually enjoyed each other's company, when they were having fun—vampires out for a night on the town."

### **Pure Evil**

Without any trace of boastfulness about LaCroix's great popularity with audiences, the actor discusses the fine line he walks in portraying the character. "In popular terms, he is the villain of the piece," Bennett acknowledges. "He represents what many people would regard as pure evil, but I don't think he sees himself as a bad person at all. I don't feel he's a bad person either. I would like audiences to, well, not sympathize with his position really, but just to accept him for who he is and not try to change him. I'm sure when he was younger, in vampire terms, he had the same doubts and troubles as Nick has now. It has taken him many hundreds of years, but he has come to terms with it and enjoys it. All he wants is to be accepted for that." Bennett laughs deeply. "My eight-year-old son has a T-shirt that says, 'You are what you are and you're OK.' And that's great.

"It's strange," he continues, "because most of the work I did in England was comedy on stage. I was pretty good at it. Here, most of the work I do is real bad-guy stuff on television. To succeed as a TV villain, you

## **Unlife to Live**

would be useless as a vampire," says Nigel Bennett, vampire master in the syndicated TV series *Forever Knight*. "I would starve to death," he groans. "I get queasy and faint at [the sight of] blood. Stage blood is OK because I know that's just pretend. I keep telling that to my kids when they get scared at the movies."

Better known as LaCroix, the black-clad, brooding nemesis of Geraint Wyn Davies' Nick Knight, the tall, British-born actor laughs heartily. For him, bringing to *unlife* the deadly LaCroix is clearly a labor of love.

"I enjoy him a lot," Bennett discloses. "I really like his attitude on life...or undeath...whatever you want to call it. It's very direct, very childlike. A little kid says, 'I want to do that,' and does it. LaCroix says, 'I want to do something,' and nobody can stop him because he has more power than most other people. He has given himself *carte blanche*. He wants to do it for his own reasons and if you don't like it, then tough on you. I like that attitude. I don't know how well it would work if more than one person were as powerful, though. It's wish-fulfillment. But he





All Forever Knight Photos: Copyright 1994, 1995 TriStar TV

**As the more ancient of *Knight's* vampire duo, Bennett's LaCroix is still waiting for Geraint Wyn Davies' Nick Knight to grow up and accept his lot.**

must be completely believable and people should be able to sympathize with you. You have to make them understand why you do the things you do, or at least convince them there is a reason, no matter how awful it is.

"LaCroix always has the best intentions for Nick. I think he looks after Nick. He sits and waits for him to come to terms, bit by bit, with the reality of his existence and who he is. LaCroix started off by trying to beat it into Nick. That clearly failed, so he has resorted to more persuasive means. He sees Nick in a process of growing up."

**"If I get sunburned, my makeup girl goes crazy."**

Bennett's ideas about his character dovetail with his theories about the current vogue enjoyed by the undead. "They represent a certain style that has completely disappeared," he suggests, "a certain romance and a lot of Old World manners which there isn't time for in modern living for most people. People like to see that. It's very mysterious, very dark. People have always been titillated by the mysterious, by the unknown. It's also very erotic, the idea of people biting each other. Have you ever noticed that whenever anyone is bitten by a vampire, you're not sure whether they're having an orgasm or dying?"



**The romance and Old World manners of vampires are what Bennett believes has kept people's interest for so long.**

"I actually did read Bram Stoker's *Dracula* years ago because I did a stage version. So, I looked up Vlad the Impaler and Elizabeth Bathory, who used to bathe in the blood of virgins because she thought it would keep her young. When I started doing this role, I didn't want to be too influenced by what other people had done, so I didn't read *Interview With the Vampire* until after the first year had finished. Also, I haven't seen the movie yet because I don't want someone to turn around and say, 'You're copying Tom Cruise.' I will see it though, if only to laugh at the actors trying to speak with the teeth in."

"My favorite ever vampire is of course, Christopher Lee in the Hammer *Dracula* movies. He was very arch, very aristocratic. He was into the best things of life, just like LaCroix. The new-style biker vampires are great, but they're very young in eternal terms. Even Nick is an adolescent and he's 720 years old. Biker vampires are just kids in diapers, really."

## Dead Mellow

Though far younger than any of those, the time that Bennett has put in on the role make him a veteran screen vampire. He has seen changes, both in himself as a performer and in the character. "Working in a series has polished my craft immensely," he reveals. "The directors don't do anything with you.

They come on and they assume that you know what your character does and you know what to do and they leave you alone. They work with the guest players. Consequently, you practice a different aspect of the craft. Also, just doing a character once is relatively easy. When it's just a guest shot, the characters are often very two-dimensional. The director and the producer look for someone who can give them what they want and if you can, they don't ask for anything more. Doing it 48 times is an altogether different discipline. It's nice to be able to add layers to a character, which you can when you're a regular."

"Maybe LaCroix mellowed when he was dead. He's less antagonistic toward Nick now. He has become more of a mentor, more of an advisor, and there are moments in the new episodes where he helps Nick and Nick actually says, 'Thank you.' It's amazing; they behave like normal people, which is nice. That sort of development is good. There's really no danger of losing the show's dramatic tension, though, so long as Nick is trying to become human—and he is, all the time. This is simply a different tack that LaCroix is using and if it doesn't work, watch out. He'll go God knows where. He

PETER BLOCH-HANSEN, *STARLOG's* Canadian Correspondent, profiled Geraint Wyn Davies in issue #212.



"Ger and I get along very well. We always have," states Bennett.



Design & Layout: Jim McLernon

could kill Nick like that, no problem, if he wanted to, but he doesn't. We just hope LaCroix doesn't run out of patience. That would be the end of the series."

Despite changes in the show, Bennett, like his vampire co-star, has run up against a major problem of working in series television—repetition. "You can't just do the same thing over and over again," he insists, "because people would get bored rigid. Geraint has often said, 'What are we doing this week?' and I'll answer, 'I tell you that you can't become human *again*. I tell you not to be stupid *again*, you get angry with me *again* and I show you that you're wrong, *again*.' They print out a shot list every week with a brief description of each shot. One of the most common titles is, 'LaCroix is depressed *again*,'" Bennett laughs. "There is still a bit of that, but many of the latest scripts really have been very inventive."

Bennett's vampire role also causes its own particular difficulties. "I don't know that any of us realized it was all going to be nights until about episode six," he confides. "We were all standing around saying, 'There's an awful lot of night shooting in this, isn't there? Oh, no! Forever *Night!*' So I made a rule that from now on, I don't [audition] for anything with 'night,' or 'dark,' or 'black' in the title."

"The teeth we use break after awhile and they have to replace them. The new teeth we have now are comfortable, but they're very, very sharp. The producers try to get you to say your dialogue with them in because it saves them money if you don't have to record it again afterwards. So, you have to be careful you don't bite your tongue."

"For some reason, the writers write in a very flowery, Old-Worldy way. They don't have to because I play it that way. They always give me these terrible lines to say, real stinkers. For example, when I was in love with Nick's sister in one episode, she says, 'My heart's breaking, my heart's breaking,' and I say, 'Yeah, and it appears to be affecting my insides as well.' Who wrote this garbage?"

"If I get sunburned, my makeup girl goes crazy. Red is a very difficult color to hide. Also, when you have sunburn, your skin is actually hotter. The makeup melts off. So, needless to say, I don't sunbathe."

"Besides the contacts in the eyes and the teeth, the biggest aggravation was the wardrobe I had to wear in the summer. You go into a wardrobe fitting in shorts and a T-shirt and they put you in six layers of felt. In one episode, I was standing there in the Sun in this Arab burnoose, about four layers, with this dark red leather turban, dying of heat. That drove me crazy."

"I'm 6' 1", but they put me in these snakeskin boots, specially hand-made for me, so I'm about 6' 3" in the show. They pinch my feet because they're so high. As soon as I get back into the trailer, they're off."

## Immortally Happy

Despite all the difficulties, Bennett is quick to point out the pleasures of working on the series. "It's a really happy set," he enthuses, "one of the easiest-going sets I've ever been on. A lot of the crew are the same people who did the first episode three years ago and they love it in the same way

that we do. John Kapelos and I haven't worked together until this year, and it's great fun. We had two episodes where we had a lot to do with each other, and John directed episode 25 of the second season. It's the episode that shows where LaCroix came from and how he was brought across [into



"They're very, very sharp," explains Bennett of his fangs. "You have to be careful you don't bite your tongue."

Photo Matthew Wolchok



Bennett is aware of his place in the long line of undead actors. "My favorite ever vampire is Christopher Lee," he reveals.



suming that we'll come back next year, which is looking very likely, they've asked me if I'll direct at least one, maybe two. That'll be fun. I'll really put my neck on the chopping block.

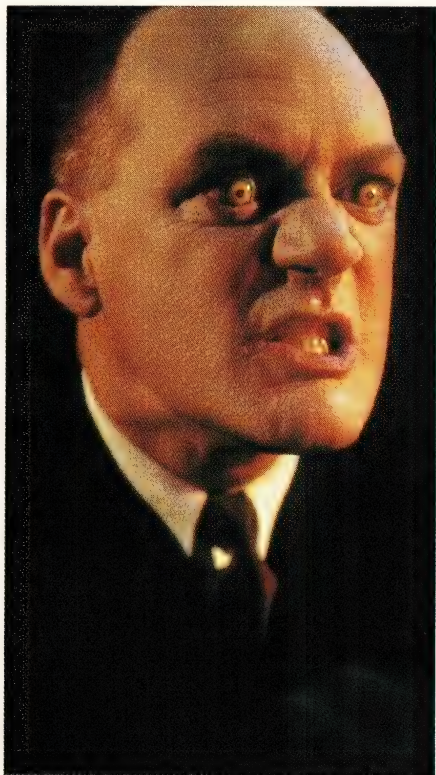
"My sons saw the first three episodes of the second season. They thought it was pretty stupid. That really brings it down to Earth. The third episode, 'Bad Blood,' I had to turn off. My three-year-old had gone to bed and my eight-year-old was watching it, curled up in a fetal position at the end of the sofa. He said, 'Daddy, turn this off; it's scary.' So, I haven't shown them any more. The show definitely works with eight-year-olds."

Fortunately for Bennett, most of *Forever Knight's* audience are older than eight, and eager to meet him in person. "A convention slut is what I am now," he confesses, chuckling. "We're all indebted to the fans and I feel it's my way of paying them back. It's great to get feedback. I like the astonishing fact that people in ordinary jobs are willing to spend their hard-earned money to see me. I love the art shows, vendors' rooms and all those sorts of things. It's not a holiday, though. I come home tired at the end of a weekend because I like to do as much as I can and make myself available all the time, but I'm happy to do it."

So, after the ups and downs of *Forever Knight*, what does Bennett remember about it all? "The last episode is what springs to mind immediately," he enthuses. "It involved the destruction of Pompeii by Mount Vesuvius. They built this astonishing set, a Roman whorehouse basically, with pillars and paintings and a swimming pool with people in it in the middle. They had it rigged so they could pull levers and it would all collapse. Then, there was my first kiss as a vampire, which was earlier this season as well: LaCroix in love. He was much younger then and he really fell head over heels for a mortal, Nick's sister, which was weird. He was devastated to have to leave her. There are other lovely moments too."

"Almost no one here in Canada knows about the show, which is really ridiculous and sometimes a source of some irritation on the set. We've done 48 episodes and it's totally Canadian. In the United States, it's so big now that people recognize me in airports, on the streets and in all sorts of places. Here, nobody knows anything about it. Absurd!"

"But it has helped me. I've done a couple of episodes of *Road to Avonlea*. They're interested in using me as a regular character. I'm doing a movie of the week soon called *Between Love and Honor*. I may be doing an episode of *Due South* and there's another movie in the works. There's quite a lot of stuff going on. I would like to be a lead in a series. That's the next step up for me. I would like to do more feature film work, and better roles in films than I've done up to now. But to do that you have to be in LA. I'm still toying with that idea. I'm not sure about it at all. But I'll work anywhere for anyone," Nigel Bennett adds, laughing, "Weddings, bar mitzvahs, I'll do anything." ❄



Things can seem pretty repetitive when you're an immortal, and also when you're in a weekly series, where some situations just keep repeating.

vampirism] and everything. John's just a lovely guy, crazy, and full of enthusiasm and mischief. Ger and I get on very, very well. We always have. It seems as if I've known him all my life.

"Recently, I saw the episode Geraint directed. Overall, it was an extremely good piece of first-time directing. There were a couple of shots of me that when he did them,

"Maybe LaCroix mellowed when he was dead."

I thought, 'What are you doing, Ger?' but seeing it on the screen was just wonderful. Because he doesn't have any preconceptions about directing, he has gone further than most directors would go. Consequently, the episode is actually more visually exciting than many of the others."

Asked to sum up, Bennett replies with a question of his own. "How can anyone complain when they're doing this sort of job?" he asks. "You get very well paid for it, you get lots of recognition and job satisfaction. It's wonderful and very good for my career. Pre-



# TRAVELING MAN

Photo: Copyright BBC TV/Courtesy Gary Leigh



By STEVEN ERAMO

Peter Purves, as Steven Taylor, shares an uncharacteristically light moment with Dodo (Jackie Lane) in the *Doctor Who* episode "The Celestial Toymaker."

**W**hen you go on vacation, you can usually count on two things: seeing new sights and meeting different and interesting people. In the 1965 *Doctor Who* adventure "The Chase," American hill-billy Morton Dill had his share of both when the TARDIS materialized on the observation deck of New York's Empire State Building. Dill soon found himself face-to-face with a Dalek. The resulting encounter between man and machine confused both and provided the episode with one of its few lighthearted moments.

With his work as Dill finished, actor Peter Purves hung up his flannel shirt and overalls and prepared to move on in search of the next gig. Instead, much to his surprise, Purves

STEVEN ERAMO, Massachusetts-based writer, profiled Anneke Wills in STARLOG #202.

found himself signed up for a much longer and more permanent tour of the universe as the Doctor's new traveling companion, Earth astronaut Steven Taylor.

Born on February 10, 1939, in New Longton, Lancashire, England, Purves always wanted to be an actor, although his mother had dreams of her son pursuing a career as a journalist. "That never really even crossed my mind," says Purves. "We did Christmas plays and all sorts of different things at school, and when I discovered that you could actually act for a living, I thought it sounded a lot like playing and was just right for me."

Purves was raised in the northern England seaside town of Blackpool, then considered to be Britain's largest entertainment center after London. Here, he spent many a day watching some of the great comics of the time performing vaudevillian plays and this, in turn, fostered his own interest in the enter-

Early on in the TARDIS, Peter Purves journeyed through time, space & history with "Doctor Who."

tainment industry. His mother unknowingly added fuel to the fire. "My mother came from a big family," he recalls. "She and her sisters, particularly an elder sister, my Aunt Jennie, loved going to the cinema and always took me along. They used to take me to some terribly inappropriate things like *Gone With the Wind*, which frightened me to death when I saw it at age five. Despite this, acting was something that intrigued me. I liked it and wanted to be involved in it.

"I remember being madly in love with the girl who lived in the house next to our school. I was about nine and she was probably 15. I saw her in a pantomime, which was a Christmas comedy show with music, dancing and people cross-dressing. It sounds decidedly kinky but it isn't, believe me, it's a very basic type of show [in Britain]. I saw her playing the principal boy, which meant showing a lot of leg, and I fell in love with her. From these sorts of beginnings, I decided acting looked like fun."

Like most actors and actresses in Britain at the time, Purves had very little formal training when he began. Instead, he started in repertory companies, now a rarity, but which served as an invaluable training ground for British actors between the 1930s and the '50s. "I did two years of repertory work and it was the best training an actor could have," says Purves. "You play many inappropriate parts and roles that you're probably very bad in, but at the same time you end up doing one or two things in which you're excellent.

"You only have a week to learn the play and a week to perform it, then you're on to the next one. I remember one miserable six-week period we rehearsed fortnightly [every two weeks] and played weekly. This meant we would rehearse one play in the morning, a different one in the afternoon, and perform still another one in the evening. As we all rapidly approached nervous breakdowns, that was abandoned and we ended up having the opportunity to really learn the part."

Purves' first professional acting role was as the Sheriff in a theatrical production of *The Rainmaker*. Although he was recovering from an operation to an injured arm, he was determined to go forward. "I had just gotten



the role and was damned if I wasn't going to play it," he recalls with a laugh. Purves then appeared in various TV spots and even worked as a tenor in the London Palladium before *Doctor Who*.

"I was broke and desperate for a job," says Purves. "I went to see Richard Martin, who was directing the *Doctor Who* adventure 'The Web Planet,' involving giant butterflies and all sorts of other insects. The part open was one of the nonspeaking butterflies, with the only requirement being one had to be able to move around reasonably well. As one of my first jobs had been in the chorus at the Palladium as a singer and dancer—I couldn't dance, but I got the job somehow—I thought I might get away with this.

"Having seen some of the plays I had done, Richard told me, 'No, it's a waste for you.' I really wanted the job and didn't want to hear him say that, because I needed the money. He went on to say, 'If I ever have a part that would suit you, I'll send for you. I would like to work with you.' So, I left feeling pretty miserable and still broke, but unlike many people who say that sort of thing, Richard actually kept his word. A few months later, he was doing another *Doctor Who* episode called 'The Chase' and needed an American hillbilly who was visiting New York to get involved with the Daleks. I ended up playing the part and it was really quite fun.

"I don't know how successful I was as a hillbilly, but everyone said I was very good, and immediately after the recording, Verity Lambert, then-producer of *Doctor Who*, and the writer, Dennis Spooner, came onto the studio floor and said, 'Peter, would you come over and have a drink with us afterwards?' So we went to the bar across the street from the studio, and they said to me, 'We don't know

if you realize this, but William Russell and Jacqueline Hill [who played the Doctor's then-current companions, Ian and Barbara] are leaving the show. We wondered if you would be interested in taking over.' "

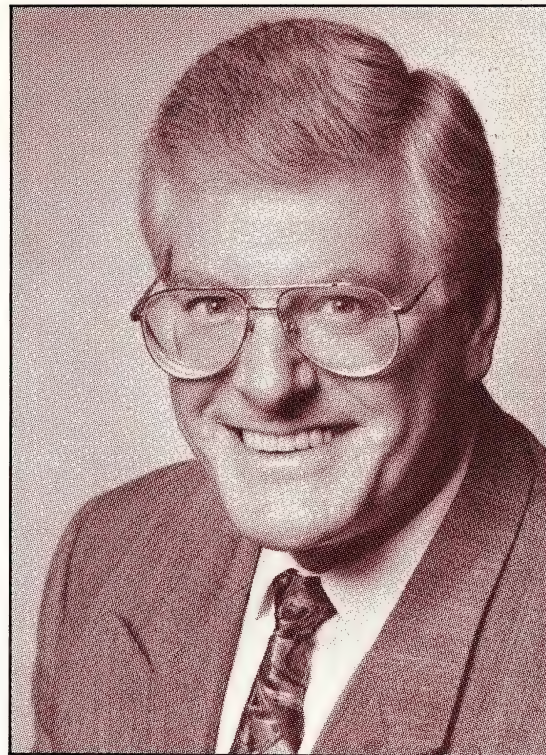
Purves was definitely interested and visited Lambert and Spooner the next day to discuss the role of astronaut Steven Taylor. He left with the part and started two weeks later, making his debut in the final episode of "The Chase." The Doctor and his companions find Steven in the wreck of a crashed spaceship, where he's being held prisoner by a race of robots called Mechanoids. Escaping from the final confrontation between the Daleks and the Mechanoids, the astronaut stumbles into the TARDIS just in time before it takes off.

## Space Pilot

Steven is described by Purves as a space pilot who was reasonably intelligent, scientifically minded and fairly belligerent. "He was ideally set up as a foil to the Doctor,"

**"Left to run rampant by himself, Steven would have become an absolute bastard."**

says the actor. "The Doctor would invariably be right, but it was for Steven to argue from his standpoint. He was brave and adventurous and would take the initiative. Steven had many good qualities, really, but he was sort of pigheaded, especially when it came to discussing something with the Doctor. There



**Pigeonholed as a children's show host, Purves started a production company to create new challenges for himself. "I quite like producing," he says.**

was plenty of room for good clashes, which never happened after the first episode ["The Time Meddler"], and that was rather sad."

During his travels with the Doctor, Steven and his two companions, first Vicki (Maureen O'Brien), followed by Dodo (Jackie Lane), faced numerous deadly enemies including the cunning female race known as Drahvins, one-eyed creatures called the Monoids and the most ruthless of all the Doctor's adversaries, the Daleks. Purves found historical episodes much more enjoyable to work on, as opposed to those which relied on alien monsters.

"We had good fun making 'The Celestial Toymaker' with Michael Gough," says Purves. "That was one with Jackie and me where we had to play games. There's a series over here on TV now called *The Crystal Maze*, and it was a bit like that. We were put in the position of having to solve these games while the Doctor was trying to solve a particular game with the Celestial Toymaker, and at any point during these games, if we were to lose, we would die. It was quite exciting as a story idea, with each episode being a game, and in the end, of course, the Doctor solved it perfectly and we all escaped."

In "The Myth Makers," the Doctor lands the TARDIS in the midst of the Trojan War, is mistaken for a god and helps to mastermind the fall of Troy. "A lovely actor, Francis de Wolf, played Agamemnon," Purves notes. "At one point, he takes the Doctor, Vicki and me into his tent for a feast. Bill [Hartnell, then the Doctor] had been getting the words wrong repeatedly, as he tended to do. He sometimes made things up but he would get through it, which made the character as far as I was concerned. For me, he is the only Doctor and none of the others came within a mile.



**"We went all over the world," declares Purves, who climbed to the top of the Fourth Road bridge in Scotland as the host of the children's series *Blue Peter*.**



"Bill had missed his lines during two takes in this particular scene. The end line is for Agamemnon to say, 'Come in, Doctor, sit down and have a ham bone,' and he throws him a piece of ham. After Bill had gotten it wrong on the second take, we did it again, but this time Francis said, 'Come in, Doctor, sit down, ham, and have a bone.' Rather cruel but very funny. It absolutely wrecked the studio and we couldn't stop laughing for at least 10 minutes!

"We did an episode about the Huguenot rebellion in France called 'The Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve' which was splendid, and we also did a Western, 'The Gunfighters,' that I thought was dreadful, but which some people actually quite liked," Purves notes. "And I must say that I also enjoyed the big 12-parter, 'The Dalek Masterplan.' It had a lot of Daleks in it, who are very boring, but it had a talented actor named Peter Butterworth playing the Meddling Monk, a character we had come across in my first story, 'The Time Meddler.' A splendid man who, sadly, is now dead."

How did Purves find working with Hartnell, an actor some people have recalled with less than great affection? "I loved him," Purves says. "I got on like a dream with him.

## "I could never accept Patrick Troughton as The Doctor."

Many people didn't, but I think most view him fairly affectionately. Bill was delightful to people and for some reason he liked me, which was fine, because that meant we worked quite well together. I found him totally reasonable in most things, and yet on some things he could be absolutely wicked. For the most part, I got on with Bill exceptionally well and he was very helpful to me.

"Bill was also very humble about the way he got the job on *Doctor Who*. He desperately wanted it, he really did, and did everything short of almost getting down on his knees to get the part. He had played the role of an old tramp in a film called *This Sporting Life*. This was a real break for him because he had always been seen as this rather rowdy, nasty Army-type guy in British comedy films. He wasn't really taken seriously as an actor. Then, *This Sporting Life* came along and it made him into an actor. He played the part tremendously, with great emotion and a lot of humanity.

"I thought he was just the superlative choice, perfect as the Doctor. Sadly, when he was getting older, he did find it more and more difficult to remember the lines and it became hard for him to continue, but I felt he was just definitive in the role. Much as I liked him, I could never accept Patrick Troughton as the Doctor. I had met Patrick several times, but he was *not* the Doctor because *Bill Hartnell* was. Jon Pertwee was never, for me, the Doctor. I know Jon very well and would say it to him, not unkindly, but for me he could never be the Doctor. Going on to Tom Baker,



Purves appeared as Boron in the 1978 pantomime *Cinderella*. Bonnie Langford, a later *Who* companion, had the title role.

Peter Davison, Colin Baker and Sylvester McCoy, all good actors, but not what *Doctor Who* is about."

## Planet Leader

Turning to his fellow companions, Purves thought O'Brien, who played Vicki, was a smashing actress. "Nice Liverpool girl with a great sense of humor," he assesses with admiration. "The same with Jackie Lane. I

knew her for a much shorter time, but she had a wonderful, ingenuous style about her that was really quite interesting. She was an extremely nice girl and right for that character [Dodo] as well."

Purves also worked with two other actresses who traveled with the Doctor for a brief period before meeting their ends at the hands of the Daleks. One was Jean (*Upstairs, Downstairs*) Marsh (STARLOG #134), who played secret agent Sara Kingdom in "The Dalek Masterplan." "What a cracker!" exclaims Purves. "I loved Jean. Absolutely adored her. She was good fun to work with, had a wonderful sense of humor, was world-wise, bright—just a gem. Jean was a lovely, splendid lady and I wish that I had stayed in touch with her after she left *Doctor Who*."

The other short-lived companion who joined the TARDIS at the end of "The Myth Makers" and stayed on until the following episode, "The Dalek Masterplan," was Katrina, a handmaiden rescued by Steven Taylor during the fall of Troy, played by actress Adrienne Hill. "Aida [Adrienne] was good fun. It was strange, because her character was one that we all expected to continue on and suddenly there she was dead. It took all of us, including Aida, by surprise. I don't think she suspected that her character was going to die, I certainly didn't. Then, Jean arrived and we were all there working together until they were both written out. So, Aida was only with the series for five weeks and then she left, which was rather sad. I saw her at a TV charity program we do over here called *Children*

Photo: Sophie Baker



"I've often wished that they would have brought Steven Taylor back," states Purves, here with his wife Kathryn Evans in the pantomime *Robinson Crusoe*.



in *Need* a couple of years ago, but that was the first time in years."

Purves' character ended his travels with the Doctor in the 1966 episode "The Savages," staying behind to become leader of an alien planet. "The last episode I did was directed by Christopher Barry, a splendid director who I've used over the past three years to do some work on various projects for my production company. It was great fun doing that last *Doctor Who* episode.

"I've often wished that they would have brought Steven Taylor back by doing a repeat visit to the planet to see what a fascist swine I had become," laughs Purves. "I think left to run rampant by himself, Steven would have become an absolute bastard. It would have been great fun to meet up with the character again."

## Traveling Host

After leaving *Doctor Who*, Purves found very little acting work, appearing in only a few episodes of the popular police drama *Z Cars*. It was nearly 18 months before the actor landed a job as a co-host of a long-running children's series called *Blue Peter*. Little did he realize that when he joined the show in 1967, he would be with it for more than 10 years, doing 850 shows and specials, as well as traveling around the world and visiting no less than 27 countries.

"There was a team of us, Valerie Singleton, Lesley Judd, John Noakes and me, and over a 12-year period, we were the only four presenters [i.e. hosts]; there was no one else. That's what you call continuity and longevity. Since that team broke up, it has been very fragmented, with only one presenter, Simon Groom, staying on for nine years. As a result, I think the program has lost some of its edge, because viewers quite like seeing the same people week after week.

"We went all over the world," he explains, "and I found that travel is the most exciting thing you can do. I'm not particu-

**During his time on *Blue Peter*, Purves appeared with England's Princess Anne in a fund-raising film for charity.**



Photo: Scott Fredericks

**For over 10 years, Purves traveled the world covering stories for *Blue Peter*. "I found that travel is the most exciting thing you can do," the actor notes.**

larly interested in doing it anymore because I've been to most places, but if you have smelled and tasted somewhere, felt the atmosphere somewhere, then you know much more about the place than you could ever learn in any other way.

"I know what the South Sea islands feel like; I've been to Tonga, Fiji, Hawaii. I've been to some wonderful places and now I know what these places feel like. I've been to Korea, Thailand, Borneo; people fought wars in these places. European guys, American guys—how did they do it? I can hardly stand the atmosphere, it's horrific. These sorts of things bring other things home to you in a frightening way.

"I've stood on a glacier when it has been 40 degrees below zero. I know what it's like to be hiding, sheltering under a waterfall in Iceland, or to be on Mount Etna with a volcano erupting. You have to be very rich to buy experiences like these, but I was lucky enough to be taken to them."

After exiting *Blue Peter*, Purves discovered the shadow of his work as a presenter very difficult to shake, ultimately making subsequent job offers very limited. "This country pigeonholes you," says the actor, "in that you aren't seen as being multi-talented. Instead, you are put into a particular area and that's what you do. So, I am not a writer, not a journalist, but a children's presenter. The fact that I've written, directed, produced, acted, done all these things doesn't matter. The thing I'm best known for is what I am, and that locks me into being a children's program presenter."

In between his radio and TV work, Purves also finds time to manage and direct his own video production company. Established in 1983, the company produces corporate videos covering a wide range of subjects, including product and corporate information and sales training. "I quite like producing," he says, "and directing, which I'm getting better at.

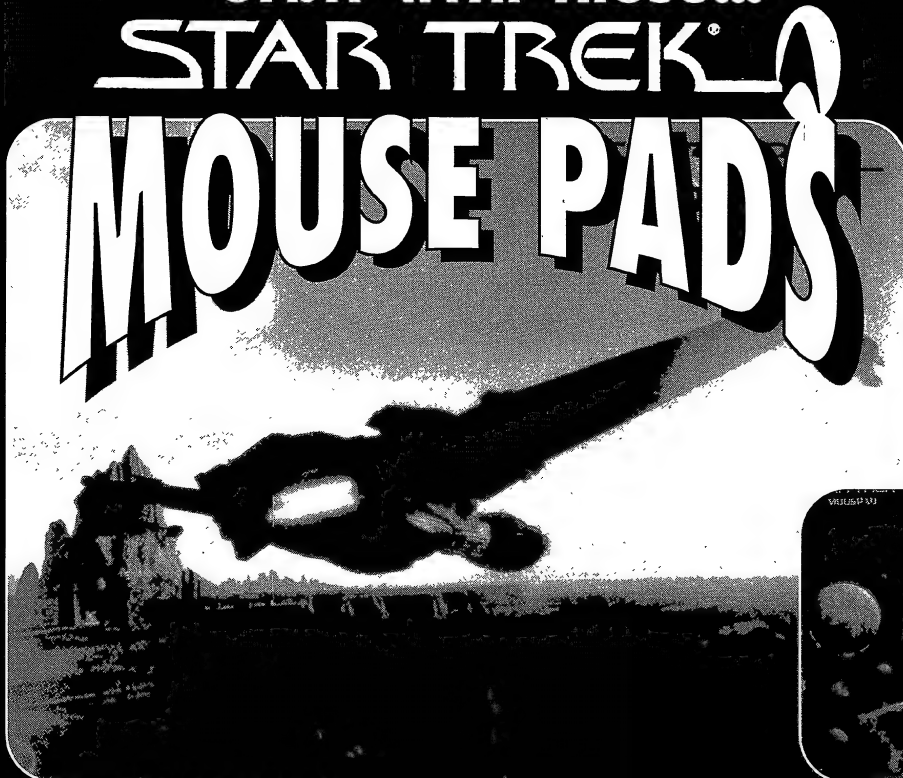
"I'm getting old, you know," Peter Purves concludes, "and the sad thing is I'm coming to all these great sorts of things at this stage in my life. I'm a typical Aquarian—very dilettante in the way I approach things. Everything I do is the best thing since sliced bread until the next thing comes along. There are a million and one things I suppose I haven't done in my life, and a million and one different roads to take. Maybe I've taken one or two wrong ones, I don't know. That's what I mean about being very dilettante about things. I enjoy what I'm doing so much at the time that I tend to neglect the things that, perhaps, I ought to be doing to make others work.

"I wish I was like Jean Marsh and able to come up with a wonderful idea for a TV series like *Upstairs, Downstairs*, which was phenomenally successful. You only need one of those in your life to sort out a whole host of things out, such as the bills and your mortgage. My experience is such that I *should* be able to do that, and for the future, if I don't, I've missed a rare opportunity to use all the knowledge that I have gained." ☆

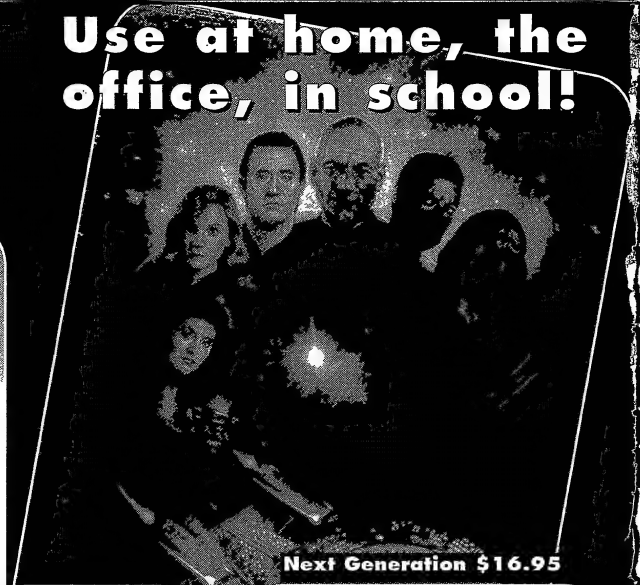


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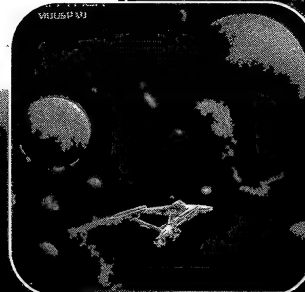
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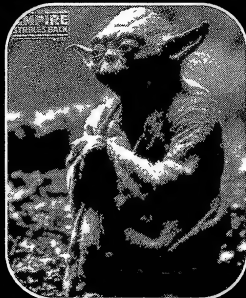
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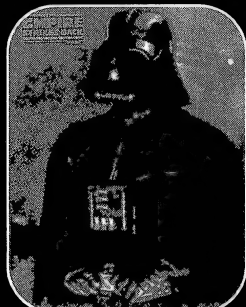
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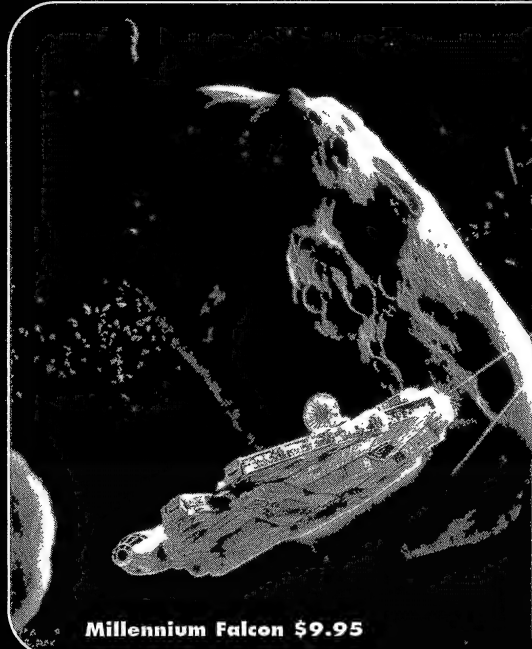
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# Some Gentle

# EVIL

By SAM MARONIE

**Best known to fans as a villain, Donald Pleasence crafted a formidable career as an actor of character.**

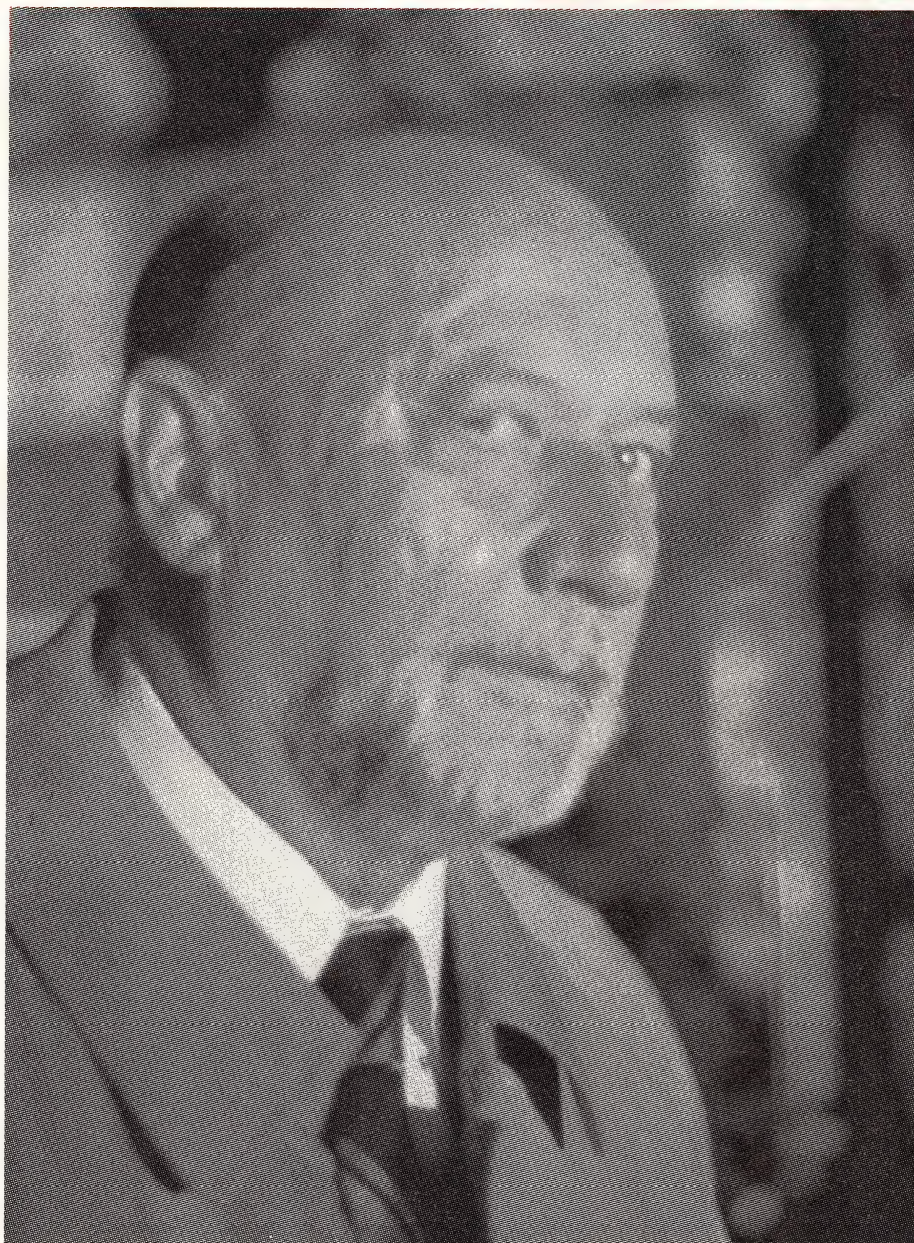
into New York City, which in 1997 has become an island penal colony. My character is kidnapped by some of the inmates and held hostage in exchange for the prisoners' release."

Pleasence, along with stars Kurt Russell, Harry Dean Stanton and others, spent several weeks in the Gateway City lensing various *Escape* sequences. St. Louis (and Atlanta, Georgia) was chosen to double for New York by director Carpenter due both to its architectural resemblance and the cooperation of city officials. However, since shooting often involved dusk-to-daybreak marathons on the outdoor locales. But for Pleasence, who always enjoyed getting away from musty soundstages, the hardships were minimal.

"It's a marvelous location. There are a lot of hours, which make for a long night, and sometimes the insects bite a bit, but I've no complaints. One of the benefits of being an 'itinerant actor' is the chance to travel and visit other countries and exotic locations," he explained. "I've done too many films that were shot entirely on indoor sets behind studio gates. Being a stage actor, this presents no great problem for me. But there's an invigorating feeling that comes from being on real locales that charges up an actor; hopefully, that shows through in his performance."

Such statements were typical of the gentle performer. Like many of the great horror actors of the past, his monstrous screen roles came from within a gentle, modestly deprecating soul. Pleasence was a connoisseur of fine art and music; he was not likely to swat the proverbial fly, let alone bury someone

*SAM MARONIE, Missouri-based writer, examined Zardoz in STARLOG #56. He interviewed Donald Pleasence in 1980.*



**T**hink of British actor Donald Pleasence and the mind conjures a seemingly endless parade of mad scientists, grave-robbers, sadistic soldiers and other assorted and sundry wackos.

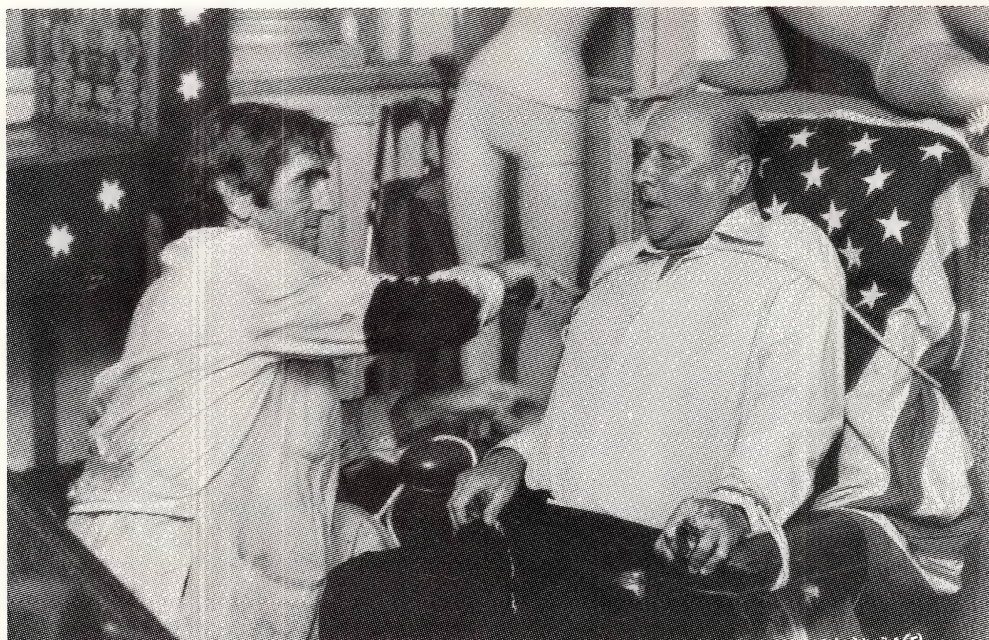
Sadly, the performer's death on February 2, 1995 of complications from heart surgery marked the loss of yet another of the great genre film actors. For while the multi-talented thespian boasted a solid background in the Shakespearean classics and theater, his main reputation came from his veritable rogue's gallery of unsavory characters.

Pleasence had been dubbed by film critics as "the screen's most necessary evil," and "the cinema's number one hiss and boo man." Even a cursory look at his villainous credentials reveals many unforgettable roles.

He portrayed Cold War superfoe Ernst Stavro Blofeld in one of the Sean Connery 007 films, *You Only Live Twice*, a miniaturized Russian double-agent in the SF thriller *Fantastic Voyage*, as well as a demented doctor in *The Mutations*. Pleasence had a skill for being both menacing and menaced. Along with his role as Dr. Loomis in John Carpenter's *Halloween* and its subsequent follow-ups, his portrayal of the President of the United States in Carpenter's cult classic *Escape from New York* brought him further fan attention.

"Well, let's say he's a slippery sort of fellow," Pleasence laughed while taking a break on the set of *Escape* at the time of its 1980 location shoot in St. Louis, Missouri. "He's a terrified man because he has crash-landed





"He's one of my all-time favorite actors," *Escape from New York* director John Carpenter said of his kidnapped President, Donald Pleasence.



In *You Only Live Twice*, Pleasence had to contend not only with James Bond (Sean Connery), but also with incontinent kitties.

alive. "I simply cannot for the life of me understand why I come to mind for parts like these," he remarked. "I just can't see where I appear so complicated or evil. Maybe Sigmund Freud would have had something profound to say about my psychological makeup."

## Bond Villainy

Born in 1919, Pleasence launched his career at age 12, with an audition at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Not terribly impressed, the instructors advised him to return when he was older and more experienced. Instead, he quit school and spent two years as stationmaster in a small English town, where he sold tickets and swept floors. At 19, he edged his way into a repertory group's production of *Gaslight*. Naturally, he portrayed the dastardly Mr. Manningham.

In later years, Pleasence acted alongside such English luminaries as Sir Laurence Olivier and Sir Alec Guinness, who both aided him in securing parts. A variety of

Broadway roles in America came his way, including the prestigious *Antony and Cleopatra*, in which he co-starred with Olivier and Vivien Leigh in 1951. He earned acclaim on stage in Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* (which he repeated in the film version, *The Guest*). On TV, the actor appeared on *The Twilight Zone* ("The Changing of the Guard"), *The Outer Limits* ("The Man With the Power"), *Ray Bradbury Theater* ("Punishment Without Crime") and *One Step Beyond*, among many others. He won the British Guild of TV Producers Award as Best Actor of the Year for a 1954 video version of George Orwell's *1984*.

As for movies, Pleasence debuted in 1954's *The Beachcomber*. He went on to make nearly 100 films—including such major motion pictures as *Sons and Lovers*, *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, *Night of the Generals* and *Shadows and Fog*.

Pleasence expressed genuine surprise at the number of genre films in which he appeared. Quizzed about his role in *You Only Live Twice*, Pleasence tried to dismiss his contributions to that 007 adventure. "Do you really think *that* would be considered science fiction?" he asked. "Actually, I'll tell you the truth about that picture. I was called in to take over from somebody who had already begun the film. It was a foreign actor [Czech actor Jan Werich], he had to leave the production for some reason. Most of his scenes were already shot and I had to retake them all.

"I never got to go to Japan or do any exotic traveling," Pleasence grimaced in mock disappointment. "Sean was spending all his hours on the golf course at the time, because he had previously filmed all the matching shots, so he wasn't needed on the set too much. I ended up spending three very, very intensive weeks playing that role to the bolts on the camera instead of another actor. Understandably, it really wasn't an enormously rewarding or fulfilling experience.

"I sort of devised Blofeld's facial scar and

other little quirks to his character. The producers liked my style, but didn't find me physically imposing, so the makeup and costuming helped quite a bit. As a matter of fact, some of the shots weren't even me at all, they were just the uniform and what was supposed to be my legs and arms."

And if things weren't rough enough, there were still other problems. "I had grave difficulties with the cat who sat on my lap all the time—actually, there were three of them that we used," Pleasence revealed. "All the hair they covered me with was bad enough—I'm allergic—but none of these felines was trained for the movies. They were terrified of the gunfire on the set and they used to do it all over me during each take whenever anyone sounded a shot. So, after every try, we had to

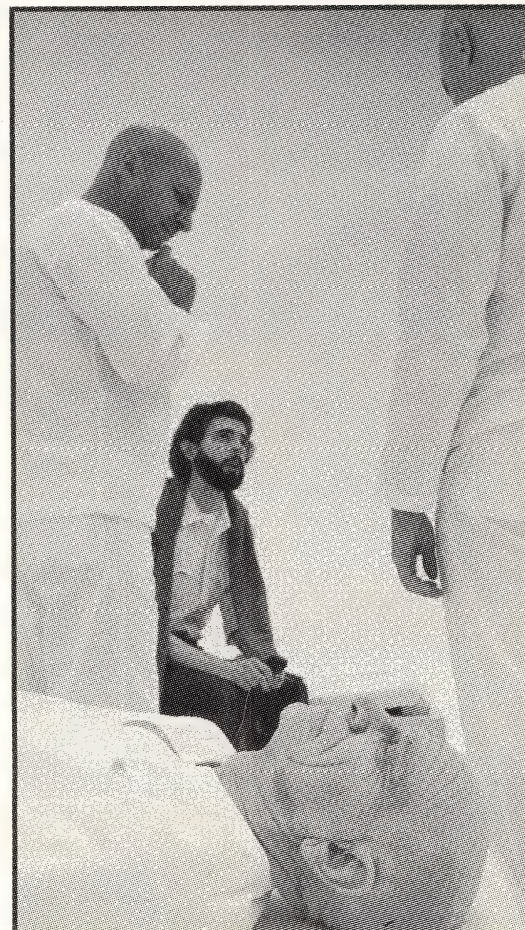
**"I just can't see where I appear so complicated or evil."**

call for a new cat—" he paused comically for effect, adding, "—and a new uniform! The crew could hardly contain their mirth, at my expense I might add."

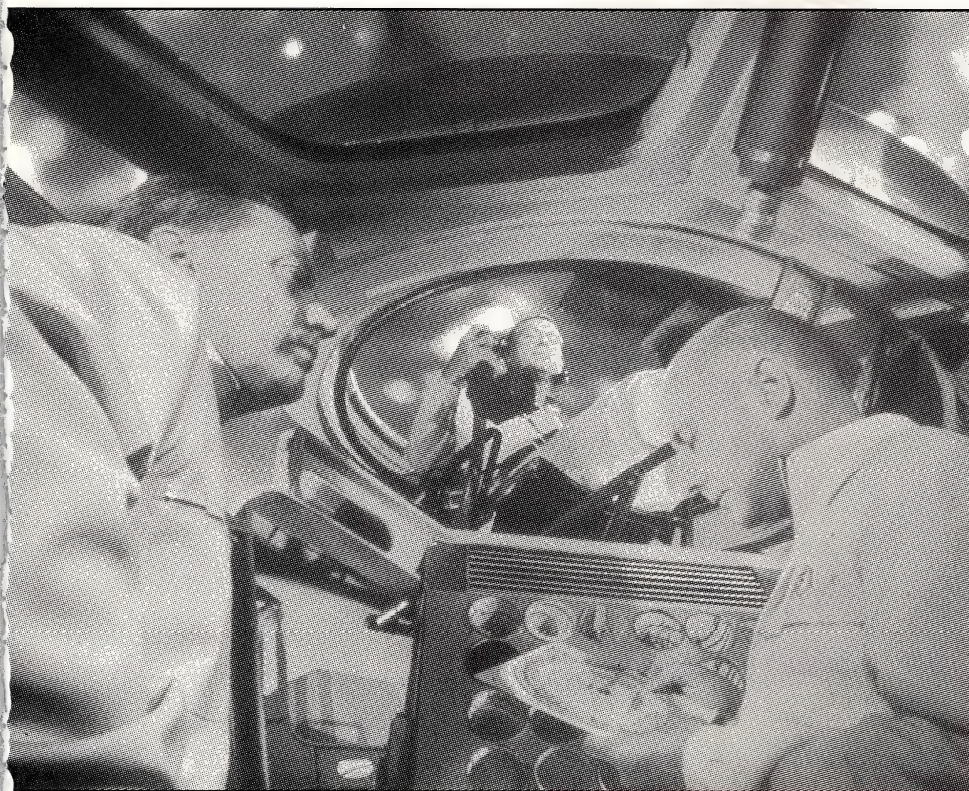
More pleasant working conditions were in store for Pleasence in the 1971 production *THX 1138*, George Lucas' least-known, first feature. To Pleasence, *THX 1138* was an extremely thrilling project. He considered Lucas one of his favorite directors.

"I had no doubt George would be very

**A very young George Lucas directed Pleasence in his debut film, *THX 1138*. "I had no doubt George would be very successful one day," noted Pleasence.**







Fantastic Photo: Copyright 1966 20th Century Fox

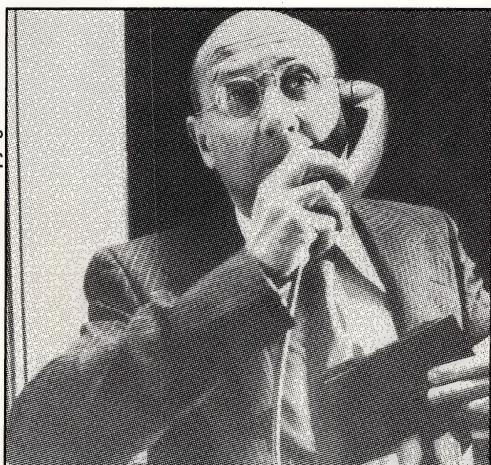
**"The shooting schedule seemed to last forever," Pleasence noted of making the special FX-laden *Fantastic Voyage*.**

successful one day, because he was a protégé of Francis Ford Coppola at American Zoetrope [Coppola's production company]. *THX 1138* was one of the first things that group ever did. The air was full of electricity and great excitement. There was an almost tangible feeling that it was going to be a very big film and that everyone concerned with it was going to be very powerful in the movie industry one day." Pleasence was right, about Lucas if not the film.

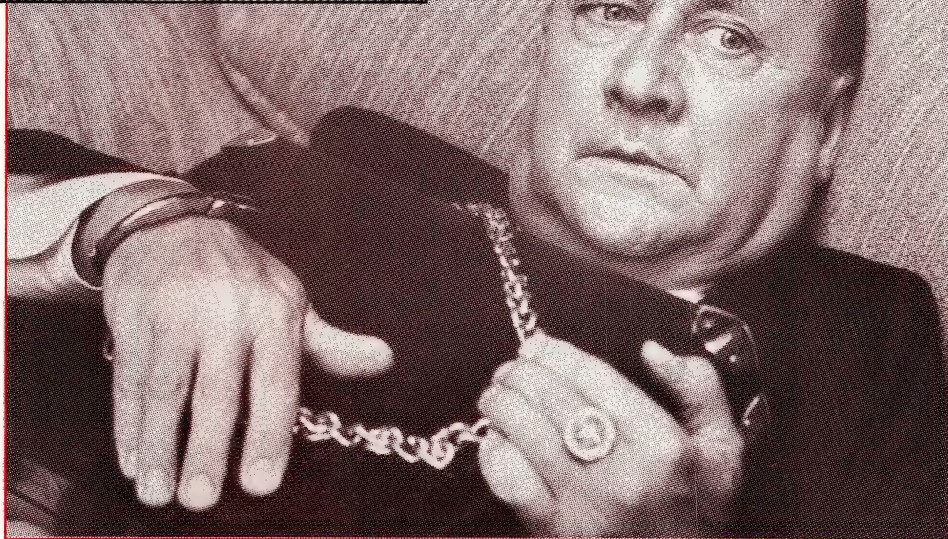
As a resident of a confined, sterile society of the future, Pleasence enjoyed one of his more sympathetic characters. "Actually, my role was sort of a loony," he laughed. "Mad as the proverbial hatter, I would say. It's a confusing part because whenever I see the film, I never quite know for sure who I am or what I am." But the actor added, cryptically, "I know that every word that I said in the film was spoken at one time or another by Richard Nixon."

His eyes brightened when questioned if

**As a Russian trying to shatter détente in *Telefon*, Pleasence wreaked havoc by telephone.**



Telephone Photo: Copyright 1977 MGM



All Escape Photos: Kim Gottlieb-Walker/Copyright 1981 Avco Embassy Pictures

**In *Escape From New York*, Pleasence's character has the veneer of civility ripped away in the Manhattan Island prison; by the end, he too becomes a killer.**

he would ever like to be a part of the *Star Wars* saga. "Oh, absolutely! What actor in his right mind wouldn't? People have termed George—and filmmakers like John Carpenter and Steven Spielberg—New Wave directors. I find it very difficult to make distinctions between those types of generalities. New Wave, old wave, what the hell? What does it all really mean, anyway? George Lucas is a director who wants to hurry up and get everything into the editing room and really isn't too involved with the actors. He can't wait to finish shooting, bundle it all up and take it off to play. He's an incredibly clever guy and I hope we get many more films out of him."

## Fantastic Treachery

In *Fantastic Voyage*, he played another "loony" with aplomb, yet became fascinated with the many complex FX. "*Fantastic Voyage* was not particularly difficult from the

acting point-of-view, but technically, it was a very trying film. It took a lot out of me physically, and when we wrapped shooting for the day, everyone was always dead tired."

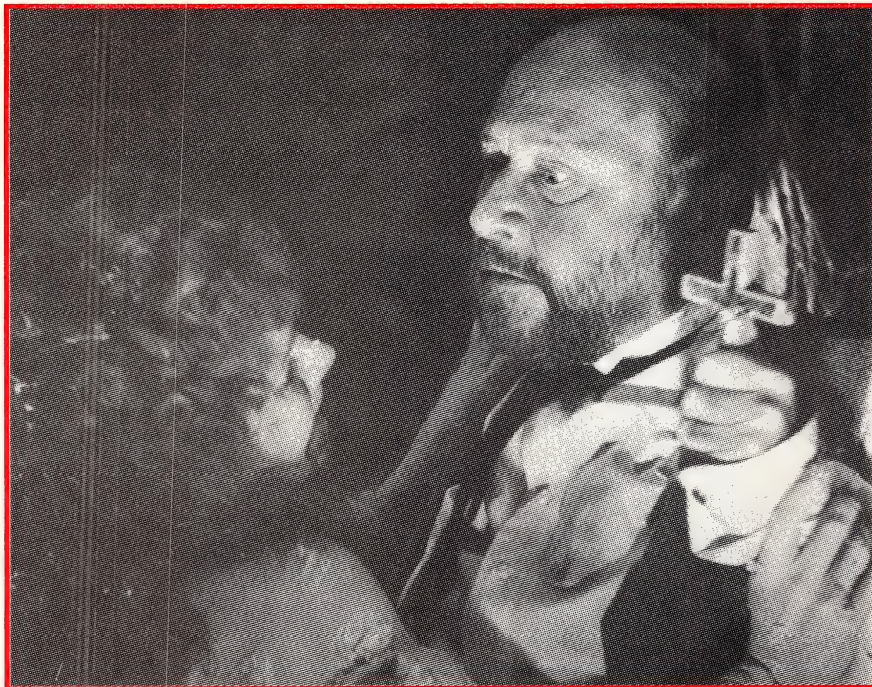
In *Voyage*, Pleasence was one of a team of scientists shrunk to microscopic size. The group must perform a crucial operation inside a human body and escape before the effect wears off—that is, unless Pleasence, a double agent and saboteur, can stop them. "The whole affair turned out to be rather boring because it went on for such a long time," he explained. "The shooting schedule seemed to last forever, and we were lucky if we got three usable shots completed in one day."

"Even though the audience saw us in the miniaturized sub in the human body, we were actually suspended on flying ballet wires that held us up over the stages at 20th Century

Fox. What began as a company joke about not drinking too much tea in the morning turned out to be alarmingly true. Once they got you up there, they would *not* let you down for anything—not even to go to the loo [bathroom]. They custom-made these special harnesses that were form-fitting—especially Raquel Welch's—and they would string us up there and spend all their time adjusting lights, camera angles and other technical details. It was a good thing none of us was prone to air sickness."

Working inside the human body was no picnic—although the crew did bring lots of food. "There was a scene in *Fantastic Voyage* when I was finally destroyed—literally eaten alive by antibodies in the human body," Pleasence said. "The crew spent about three days trying to approximate what an antibody would look like, using all types of horrible concoctions. They tried porridge first, then tapioca pudding, then rice pudding. I would





Pleasence fought the creatures of the night alongside old friend Laurence Olivier in 1979's *Dracula*, "an awful film."

sit there and the prop men would—with great delight, I might add—pour buckets of this goop on me and then shoot a test," he paused, shaking his head ruefully. "I would shower, put on another costume, and then they would slop some other garbage on me. I never did find out just what they settled on, but I think it was the tapioca."

## Necessary Evil

Where parts are few and far between for some performers, Pleasence was kept busy acting for most of his career. In *Telefon*, Don Siegel's 1977 spy adventure, Pleasence was an unglued Russian defector who tried to destroy détente by literally phoning in acts of terrorism. In *The Madwoman of Chaillot*, he almost levelled Paris in a quest for underground oil.

In the 1979 version of *Dracula*, Pleasence played Dr. Seward, unbalanced proprietor of a Victorian madhouse. He was an eccentric

headshrinker in *Tales That Witness Madness*. He couldn't even appear in the Western *Will Penny* without being a bit nasty. "You can't do much worse than setting fire to Charlton Heston's Christmas tree," he remarked about that film.

Pleasence's other genre movies include 1984 (with Edmond O'Brien), *Cul-De-Sac*, *Circus of Horrors*, *The Hands of Orlac*, *Mania* and *Escape to Witch Mountain*.

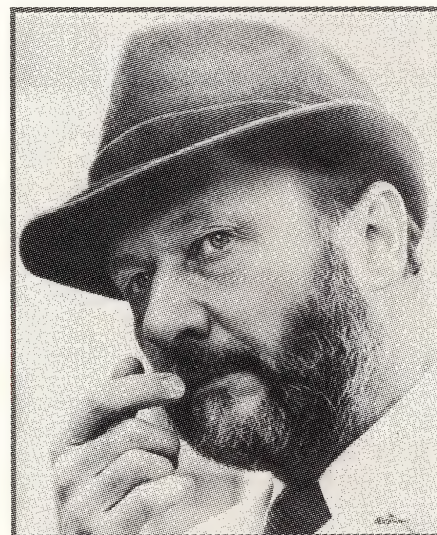
**"I've played more comedy roles than any other types."**

Of course, during his career there were many other parts. Although genre fans may think he was always nasty, he was at home in comedy, witness his efforts in *The Hallelujah Trail* (as an alcoholic seer), *Oh, God* and *Hearts of the West*. "Everyone thinks I've

played a lot of Nazis like Maximilian Schell," he remarked. "I was Heinrich Himmler in *The Eagle Has Landed*, and after Himmler, what's left? With a real-life monster like that, anything fictional pales in comparison."

The actor's own personal World War II exploits with his British squadron when he parachuted over occupied France in 1944, soon to find himself a reluctant resident of a German POW camp, were put to good use two decades later when he starred in the classic POW film, *The Great Escape*. He was hospitalized for six months after the ordeal of prison, weak and suffering from advanced malnutrition. Pleasence also appeared in a 1990s TV movie remake/sequel to *The Great Escape*, this time as a Nazi.

While he confessed to wanting those real-life terrors forgotten, Pleasence also admitted some film experiences seemed equally horrible. "There was a sort of horror picture that I did called *The Mutations*," he remembered. "I think I did that solely for the money. I have six daughters, and they can be quite expensive, so one has to keep working and be able to pay the bills. I did get to work with Tom [Dr. Who] Baker. He's a very charming,



The horror flick *The Mutations* was just a paycheck for Pleasence. "I surely wouldn't list that among my proudest moments."

bright man and I liked him very much. I remember that movie as a very happy time; the whole gang of us were very friendly, and that means so much when you're working together. But I surely *wouldn't* list that film among my proudest moments."

Contrary to what some film buffs may assume, Pleasence never appeared in a Hammer Studios horror film. "I can make that statement with pride," he laughed, cautioning that he was "only kidding. Actually, they've made some very interesting pictures, but not with me."

Nevertheless, he had fond memories of Hammer alumni Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing. "I knew Peter for what seems like forever. I did a lot of live TV plays with him in the early days of television. We did one picture together in Greece called *Land of the*

Envisioning *The Hallelujah Trail* as the drunken seer Oracle Jones, Pleasence displayed his talent for comedy.







Happy with the first *Halloween*, which he felt rose "above the usual claptrap," Pleasence reprised Dr. Loomis in *Halloween II* and subsequent sequels.

Pleasence seemed hard-pressed to say an unkind word about anyone. And likewise, he's the recipient of much praise from his colleagues. The entire cast of *Escape from New York* were unanimous in their high regard for him.

"He's just the best there is," proclaimed Ernest Borgnine, who portrayed Cabbie. "Everything he does is polished and always very interesting. I think I've seen almost every film he's made, and while they haven't all been good, Donald has made them worthwhile."

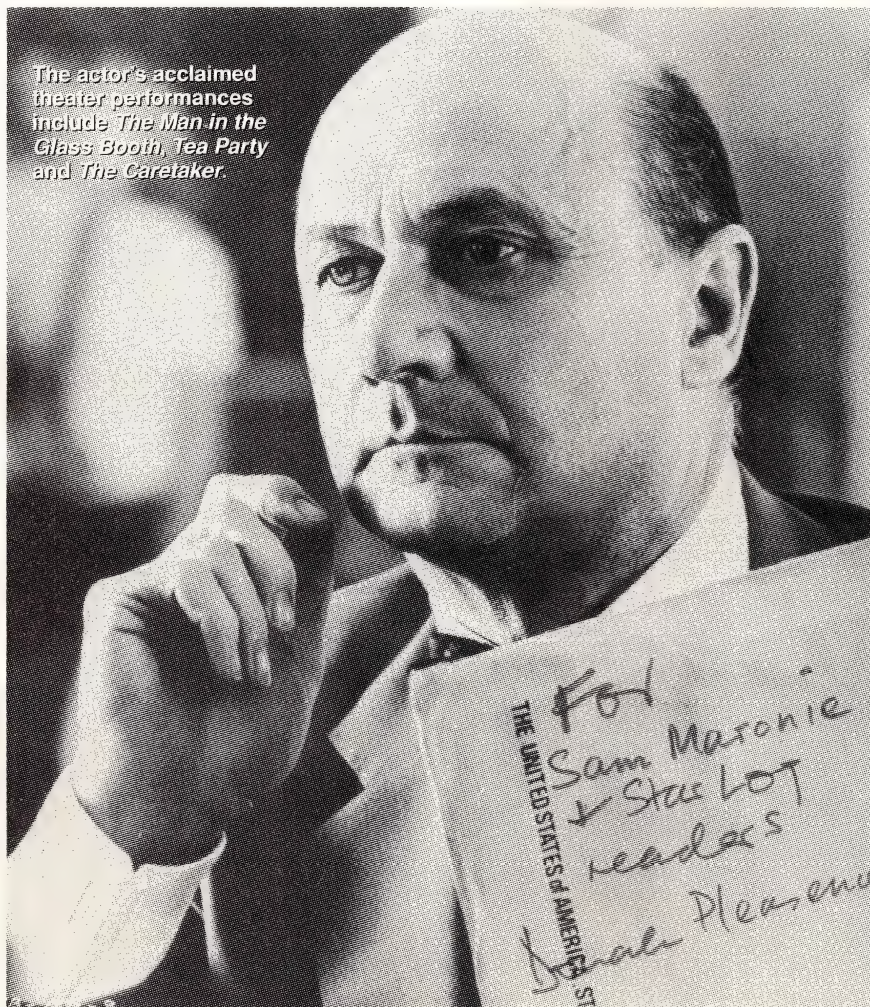
Another fan among the *Escape* crew was director Carpenter, who cast Pleasence in the phenomenally successful *Halloween*. "Fabu-



Tom (*Dr. Who*) Baker was lucky enough to be unrecognizable behind heavy makeup in *The Mutations*.

All Mutations Photos: Copyright 1974 Columbia Pictures

*Minotaur*—which was a pretty dreary affair. I first met Christopher during the remake of Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* in the mid-50s. We appeared in a horror picture together, *Death Line* [released in the U.S. as *Raw Meat*], and I continue to see him off and on."



The actor's acclaimed theater performances include *The Man in the Glass Booth*, *Tea Party* and *The Caretaker*.

lous," Carpenter described their working relationship. "He's one of my all-time favorite actors. Any time I can work with him I jump at the chance. His daughters took him to see one of my earlier pictures, *Assault on Precinct 13*, and recommended that he accept the part in *Halloween*, because he wasn't too keen on doing it at the beginning. He read the script and said, 'Well, I don't quite understand it, but I'll do it.' He had enough confidence in me after viewing that movie."

Pleasence couldn't heap enough kudos on the youthful director. He credited Carpenter with taking what he first believed to be a routine exploitation entry and turning it into a terror classic. In *Halloween*, Pleasence was the psychiatrist who trails the maniac stalking Jamie Lee Curtis. Under Carpenter's guidance, the low-budget film became the biggest box-office grosser of any independent film up to that time. "John Carpenter is a very bright, creative director, and I'm happy to be working with him again. He does a professional, polished job and knows how to bring the best out of his performers. During the shooting [of *Halloween*], I had a hunch that this was going to rise above the usual claptrap."

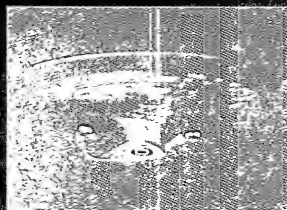
Pleasence resided in Chiswick, West London in a rambling 18th-century mansion. He was fond of relaxing there in between pictures. He later lived in St. Paul de Venice in France with fourth wife, Linda. It was there that he passed away, at age 76. ☆

All Innocent Bystanders Photos: Copyright 1972 Sagittarius Productions

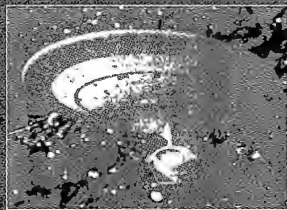


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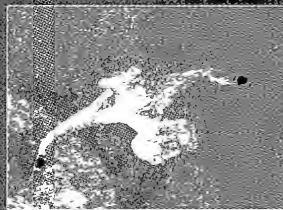
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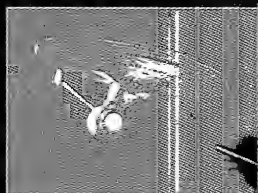
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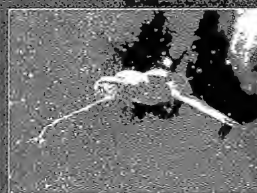
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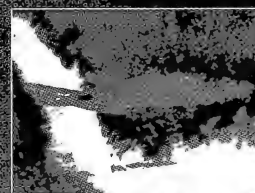
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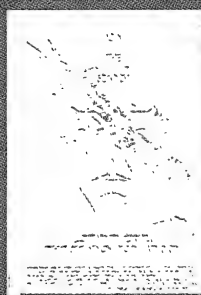
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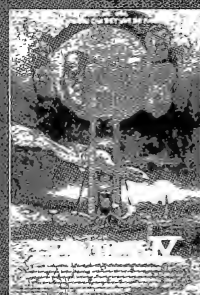
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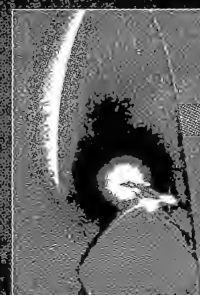
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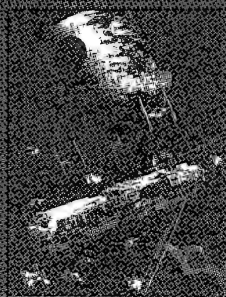
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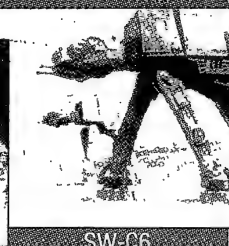
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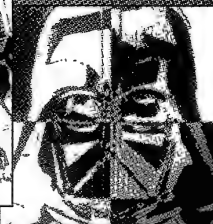
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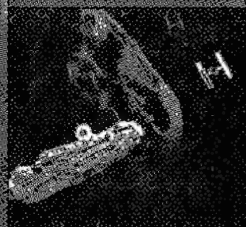
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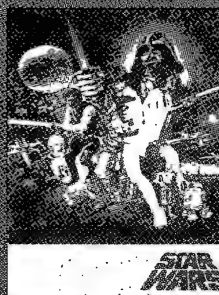
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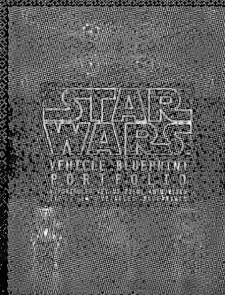


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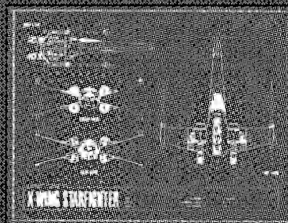


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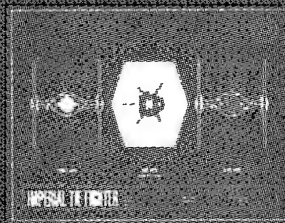
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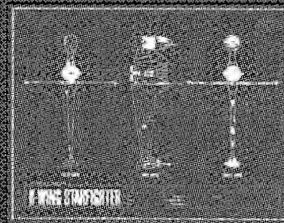
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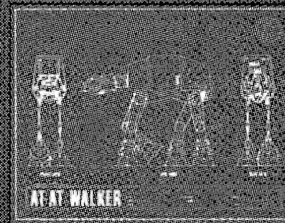
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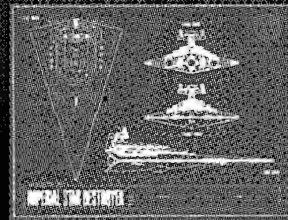
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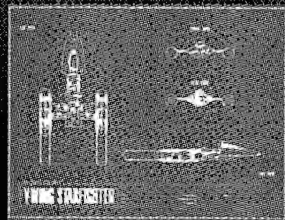
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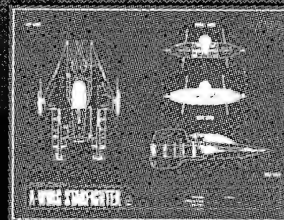
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## Duchovny

(continued from page 30)

looking for film roles to do during his hiatus from *The X-Files*. Last summer he struck out because of scheduling difficulties. "I'm hoping to be able to do something. It'll just have to be a matter of the planets lining up perfectly. 'If the moon is in the seventh house and Jupiter aligns with Mars, then David will be in a film. And peace will guide the planet, too.'"

The thought of playing only one role for several years gives him pause. "It's so scary," Duchovny says, a little afraid that his acting skills might stagnate. "I'll have to see when I do something else. It's just a little frightening. It's probably like being married for a while, then going out on dates. You don't know if you can do it until you go out and do it. I feel like I'm married to Mulder and sometimes I would like to date somebody else." Duchovny laughs, "I want to have an affair behind his back."

Is there a dream role he would like to play? "No, because if I knew it I would write it." Writing is something Duchovny does "more naturally than anything else besides playing with a ball." Though he doesn't see himself giving up acting to be a writer, he thinks he'll never stop writing. "I think it'll end up being something very important to

me, I just don't know exactly what yet."

One way this talent has expressed itself was in the two-part *X-Files* case called "Colony" and "End Game." Duchovny came up with the idea for the story and executive producer Chris Carter and writer Frank Spotnitz wrote the script.

"I didn't write the story," reveals Duchovny. "I had an idea and I told it to Chris. He liked it and we worked it up together. He was kind enough to give me story credit."

### X-Student

Most of what Duchovny writes is poetry. His pedigree as a writer is even more distinguished than his training as an actor. He has degrees from Princeton and Yale in English Literature, but found that in trying to break into the film industry those degrees were worthless as far as opening doors.

"I worked so hard as a student for about 12 years to attain some kind of goal and status in that world, and then I started acting and that counted for nothing. For nothing. Other people couldn't care less that I went to Princeton and Yale. Suddenly, all of this work I had done counted for nothing in my professional life, and sometimes I just wanted to cry out, 'But I worked so damn hard! Can't I get a break?'"

To be sure, the education probably gave Duchovny (Also profiled in *STARLOG* #202) a sharp mind for story, a valuable thing for an actor. He has definite ideas of which scripts he likes and which he sees as flawed.

Of the popular writing team of Glen Morgan and James Wong, who exited *The X-Files* to produce a pilot for Fox called *Space*, Duchovny says, "I'll miss them. I thought they did really great work." Though he feels Morgan and Wong wrote some of the best scripts, there was the occasional clunker. "Something like '3,' it had no logic. I mean, you don't understand who's the vampire, why they want to be vampires, what kills them, when it kills them, and this all doesn't make any sense."

However, the episode he refers to as his "sentimental favorite" is also a Morgan and Wong script: "Ice," the first season adventure set in the Arctic with extraterrestrial parasites. "It was our first really *rocking* show. Then this year, I think that 'Duane Barry' and 'Ascension' were fantastic." That was the two-parter about the abduction of Agent Scully (Gillian Anderson).

The person working on *The X-Files* Duchovny admires most is its creator. "Chris Carter is great. He's the only person I know who works as hard as I do on the show. He just won't let it be any less than the best it can be and that's a spur for me to work hard. It also gives me a lot of confidence that the show is *always* going to be good as long as he's around."

David Duchovny shrugs over an assessment of himself. "I am determined. I don't know as to what I'm determined to do, but I have determination." He chuckles, "I'm a morose S.O.B., but I have moments of life."

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# Gough

(continued from page 53)

things!"

As for Cushing, when told that one never hears an unkind word about the late actor, Gough adds, "And you never will hear an unkind word about him. I knew Cushing very well, because we were on tour together in the theater, and we shared a dressing room most of the time. We got on very well together. I knew him very well, and his wife Helen; we were mates. He was the sweetest man, a saint. He was so stricken when his wife died, absolutely stricken.

"I did one film with him after his wife died, *Top Secret*. I said, 'How are you, how's everything,' but I didn't really talk to him while we were making it. And then as I left, I said, 'Peter, I'm off now, I'm away, good luck with the rest of the film.' He said, 'I'm finished too, but I can't talk now, I've got to go home and talk to Helen.' She was dead, but he used to go and talk to her."

Of the various genre films Gough has made (which he also discussed in *FANGO-RIA* #84), the earliest—and one of the

**"I think Batman needs Alfred."**

best—was the classic comedy from Ealing Studios, *The Man in the White Suit* (1951), which starred Alec Guinness. "I played a rather horrible young man who's going to marry Joan Greenwood. I loved the Ealing films, they were great. In a way, it was like a repertory company. There was a pub where the directors used to meet in the evening, and if you hadn't earned any bread for some time, you would go down to that pub and have a few jars, and say, 'Is anyone doing any tests?' And they would say, 'Yeah, I'll put you in.' You would do tests; they would be testing a girl, and you would have your back to the camera, or be off camera, feeding the lines. You would get some money for it. We kept on going to Ealing. Even if you weren't in the films, you could find work there, very often."

Despite his fling with horror movie stardom, and his prominent role in the *Batman* movies, Gough likes being a character actor. "I am a featured supporting player, and that's just what I'm happy being. Someone said, 'He's just a guy, but if you put him in a nightie and put a crown on his head, he's the King of England.' I feel like that—I'm just me. I put a butler's tie on and I can be a butler; I won't be me any more, although you use yourself.

"I'm very lucky, because here I am, knocking on 79, and I'm still working, I haven't had to retire as one does in other professions. With acting, you can go on forever—that's the wonderful thing about it. I like my work; I'm very lucky. I have a lovely family; I've got a lovely wife," says Michael Gough, "and I'm extraordinarily blessed."

# Congo

(continued from page 45)

This sort of thing is a little hard to do sometimes, because you really have to stretch the believability with certain things that aren't there, that you know are going to be there when the time comes, like Ivan Reitman's 60-foot marshmallow man. It's nice to work with people who are good at their work, and these guys are *really* good."

Campbell doggedly went after the leading role in the movie. "I went in and bugged Frank to see if I could get the lead, the guy who worked with the apes. My big pitch to him was, 'Frank, I've done this rough-and-tumble stuff, I'm the guy you want in the Costa Rican jungle when push comes to shove.' I must have made some lame impression, because even though they cast Dylan Walsh, they called and offered me a secondary part. I jumped at it.

Photo: Merrick Morton



**Michael Lantieri's mechanical FX team was busy. "On this set, we have wind and rain, and these air-driven stone spikes that thrust upward through the ground."**

"This is the only Crichton book I've read," Campbell adds, "and I always thought it would make a great movie." Although his character doesn't live long, the actor went to Costa Rica, since he had to be seen traipsing through the same jungles the main cast would traverse later in the film, but was given a lot of time off. "Our shots go real quickly, then they shoot with the main unit and they work for days. As soon as we heard we [the doomed first expedition cast] weren't being used the next day, we would run down to the travel agency and book a river rafting trip for the next day. It was hard to face the crew after a while," he laughs.

## Jungle Locales

With something of the feeling of life imitating art, while in Costa Rica, the *Congo* crew witnessed one real volcanic eruption after another. "We were at the foot of a volcano when it erupted about four or five times in one day," an amazed Campbell says. "It was a thrill to see those Volkswagen-sized rocks come tumbling down. The ILM people were shooting at the time of one of the explosions, so there's about two-thirds of a really good eruption on film. Probably not as good as the one they can make themselves,

though; Mother Nature always seems to fall short of ILM."

The main spectacle of the eruption, insofar as it affects the cast, though, will be the FX sequence that climaxes the film, as the expedition's surviving members flee through the Lost City of Zinj. The set for the Lost City was built on Stage 15 at the Sony Studios, which housed Munchkinland for *The Wizard of Oz* back in 1938—from a yellow brick road to a yellow-mineral river. Riva and his team have outdone themselves. This colossal set, made mostly of carved, fire-proof styrofoam, is 285 feet long by 145 feet wide. There are real plants scattered about with automatic misters keeping the greenery green.

This is a vast, convincing set, with carved statues, tumbled pillars, thick vines, giant fallen trees and a sense of ancient knowledge combined with an eerie feeling of being watched, as if the builders of the city are still guarding its secrets, just out of sight.

Then there's TraviCom headquarters, with something like 50 Silicon Graphic computer monitors all over the place in a roughly circular arrangement in the middle of the room, with some of the computer workstations facing out, some facing in, all adorned with the paraphernalia to reflect the personalities of the computer operators. In the interests of verisimilitude, the filmmakers have invented three other expeditions currently underway by TraviCom, including one *Star Wars* fans may recognize—it's named "Blue Harvest"; one is to some frozen area, another to a desert, and the third on an oil derrick. Real photos from the space shuttle *Endeavor* will be used on screen to map the Virunga region for *Congo*; Rutgers University is cooperating with information about real mountain gorillas.

Stage 8 has been devoted to the actors playing the gorillas; each has his own area, there is a heavy-duty jungle gym arrangement, built out of steel and telephone poles, for them to practice their gorilla abilities. And there's a hot tub for them to relax in when their strenuous work is over for the day. The room takes on a macabre aspect from all the fiberglass hippo heads lying along one wall.

Back on the mine set, production assistants are scattering the "diamonds"—crystals grown especially for the film—around and Winston is directing the second unit for reverse angles on the scene of Amy trying to protect her precious Peter Elliot from the grey gorillas.

Before the shot begins, the gorilla actors, in full garb, neatly sweep away the imprints their knuckles left in the dust in the previous take. As they all gather to watch the videotape of that previous take, a gorilla with a strange, gibbon-like hand sticks a hairdryer (set on cool) in his mouth to cool off. No one on the crew blinks as this grey ape joins them in front of the monitor and squats to watch the playback. Just another day deep in the heart of *Congo*. \*



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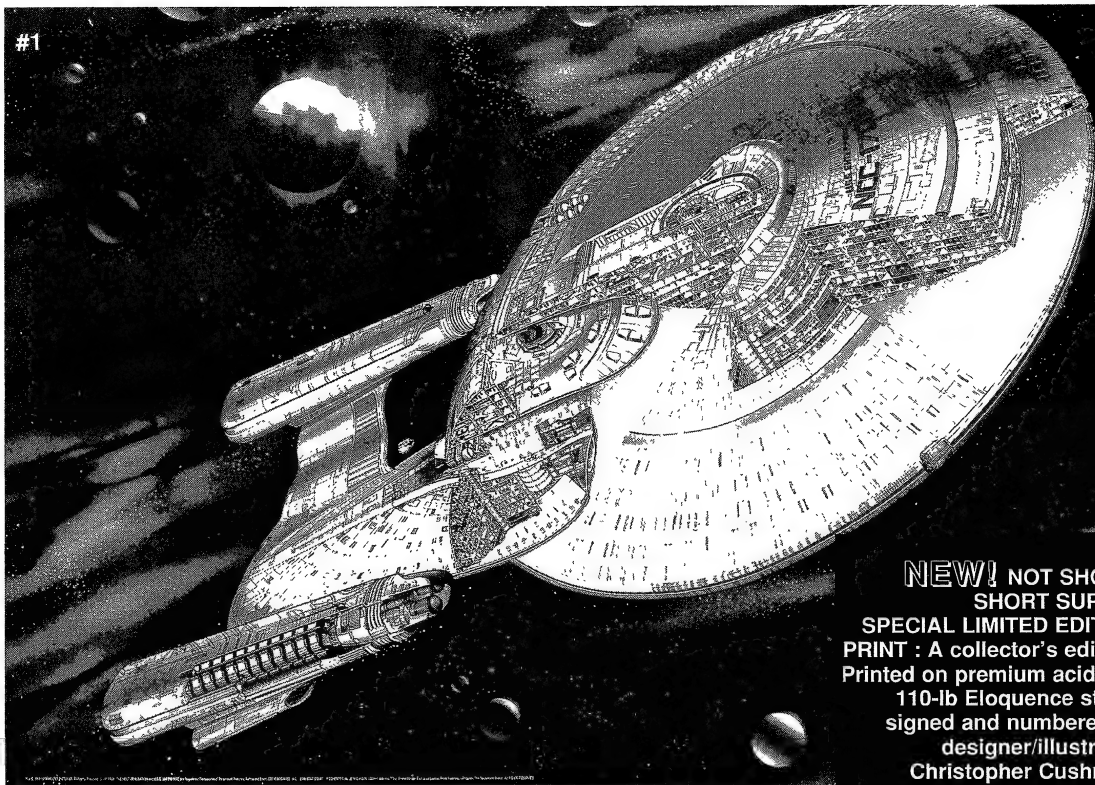
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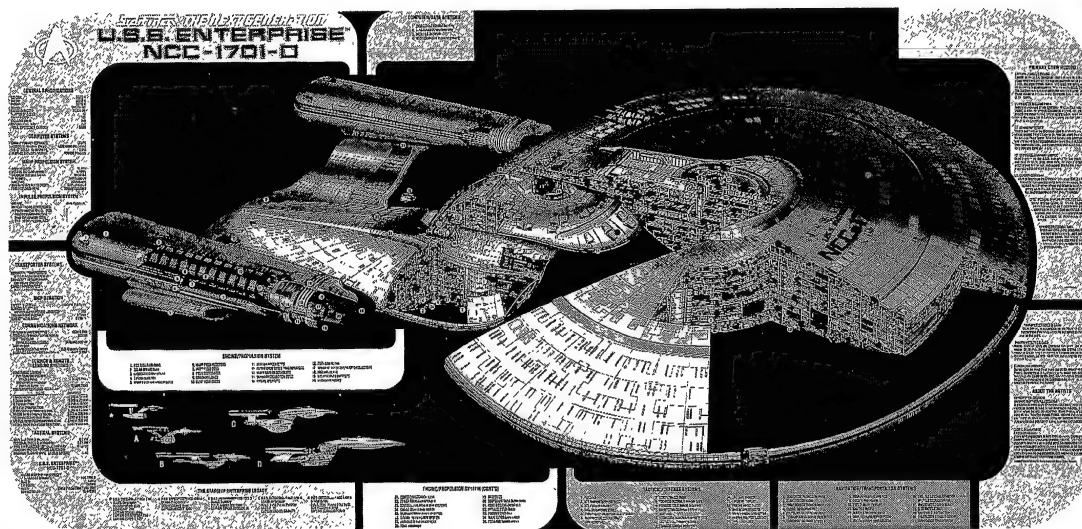
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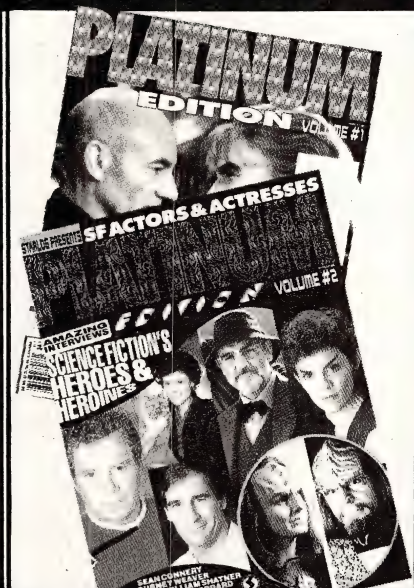
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# FROM THE BRIDGE

## Toaster Jockey on "Babylon 5"

**T**hree years ago, I wrote an essay titled "Grasping His Star" (STARLOG #180). The subject was Adam Lebowitz, who served as a STARLOG intern while he was in high school, then went in pursuit of a movie career. I reprinted a letter in which Adam told of getting involved with the Video Toaster (a 3-D visual animation gadget) and being hired as assistant animator for the pilot of the yet-to-be-seen *Babylon 5*.

"I'm packing my bags for Hollywood right now!" Adam wrote, full of excitement. "My dream just came true!"

Now hold that little piece of history in mind as we flash forward to the present. For three years, Adam has been living in California, working as a Toaster jockey for Foundation Imaging, the company that does *Babylon 5*'s visual FX. Recently, he came home to New York for a week's vacation, and we spent an afternoon together, seeing the new laser show at the Hayden Planetarium and talking science fiction.

Three years in Hollywood have changed very little about Adam—except his name. He is now called Mojo. (I don't want to know where it came from!) In addition to his high creative energy, Adam...uh, Mojo...has always had a high level of weirdness.

*Star Wars* was his favorite movie at 10 and, "corny as it sounds," he once wrote, "that movie changed my life." Later, he grew fascinated with shows that were less mainstream. For several years, *The Prisoner* was his obsession, and he wrote a script (unproduced) for *Sledge Hammer!*, another short-lived TV series. One of the buttons he used to wear summed up the Mojo attitude: "Why Be Normal?"—with the word "Normal" written upside down or backwards. You get the picture.

"Do you watch *B5*?" he asked as we munched hamburgers.

"I hate to tell you," I hesitated, determined to maintain my commitment to the truth, "but I've never gotten captured by the series. Every time I've seen an episode, I've been overwhelmed to the point of distraction by the exotic alien makeups, rich, detailed costumes and lavish, colorful visuals. The problem is, I don't *know* the characters personally, and I always feel like I've walked in mid-story."

"Yeah," Mojo replied, with his usual enthusiasm, "that's how *B5* is different from *Star Trek*. It has a long, overall story, not just short weekly events. After watching *Babylon 5* for a few years, you're going to feel like you've read an epic novel in several volumes. But you're right, that format makes it hard to follow if you only watch occasionally."

"Dorothy Fontana has written several episodes," I said, "including 'Legacies,' 'A Distant Star' and 'The War Prayer.'"

"And David Gerrold wrote 'Believers,'" Mojo reminded me. "All the scripts from outside writers are relatively self-contained stories, but the *B5* creator, J. Michael Straczynski, writes all the episodes that move the long-line story forward."

"Are you happy working on the show?" I asked.

"Are you kidding?" Mojo almost choked on a mouthful of fries. "I'm ecstatic! Our visual effects supervisor, Ron Thornton, hires people with *potential*, and I'm fortunate to work with a super-talented crew. Ron doesn't hold us down. He wants us to soar.

"But you know me," he continued, "I'm always impatient. And I'm still a *Star Wars* puppy. I want to make spaceships swoop in from above and create complex dogfights and all that spectacular stuff. During the first year of production on the series, I got a tiny taste of FX directing, and I loved it!"

"So have you been given greater responsibilities?"

"Oh, yeah," Mojo beamed. "The *B5* episode you *must* watch is 'The Coming of Shadows.' It's pivotal in the overall storyline. I choreographed the space battle that takes place midway in the episode, and I directed the visual FX. Others in the effects field saw the episode, including people who work on *seaQuest* and *Voyager*, and they were very complimentary. You can imagine how that thrilled me!"

"The Coming of Shadows" aired in New York during January 1995. Mojo's space battle was not only a complicated ballet of many different ships, light beams and explosions—it was also beautiful. In fact, it was more vivid and romantic than such realities will ever be. It was truly an awesome sequence. What more can a viewer ask, when it comes to battles in space?

And what more can Mojo ask, when it comes to work?

Well, a lot. Foundation Imaging is about to produce their own shows, and Mojo wants to write scripts and supervise FX and, someday, direct and produce. He has always been a pushy, over-confident New Yorker, and I have no doubt that he will eventually elbow his way into all the things he only dreams of doing today.

More than just a talented friend, Mojo is a living example of what I've been preaching in this magazine for years: It is not impossible for a science-fiction fan to become a science-fiction professional. Dreams *can* come true.

Basically, isn't that what science fiction dramatizes?

—Kerry O'Quinn



# HIS PILGRIM SOUL

**S**ome people sing in the shower. For others, a shower is simply a wake-up call to begin another day. For fantasy novelist and TV writer Alan Brennert, the shower is often the birthplace of story ideas.

An executive story consultant and staff writer for CBS' *The Twilight Zone* from 1985 to 1987, Brennert recalls a conversation he had with fellow *Twilight Zone* writer Rockne O'Bannon. "Rock said, '*Twilight Zone* stories are the kind that occur to you

while you're in the shower,' and he was right. You can't sit down and think, 'I will now come up with 12 *Twilight Zone* ideas.' They're ideas that pop into your head, or they're triggered by associations that are hard to articulate. And I find that to be true with most of my fantasy ideas, whether they take the form of novels, short stories or TV shows."

Brennert has written plenty of each since his career began more than 20 years ago. Besides *The Twilight Zone*, his TV credits include *Wonder Woman* and *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*, as well as *L.A. Law* (for which he earned an Emmy as producer in 1991), *China Beach* and *Simon & Simon*. When not crafting TV scripts, Brennert concentrates on his first love: writing fantasy novels and short stories. To date, he has published three novels, two dozen short stories and a stage play. Currently, he's working on another of five scripts he's contributing to Showtime's *Outer Limits* revival (STARLOG #214).

Following his imagination has led writer Alan Brennert into new worlds of the fantastic.

By BILL FLORENCE



Photo: Paulette L. Claus/Courtesy Alan Brennert

"I love contemporary stories in which reality is slightly skewed," says Brennert, who categorizes his work as fantasy rather than science fiction.

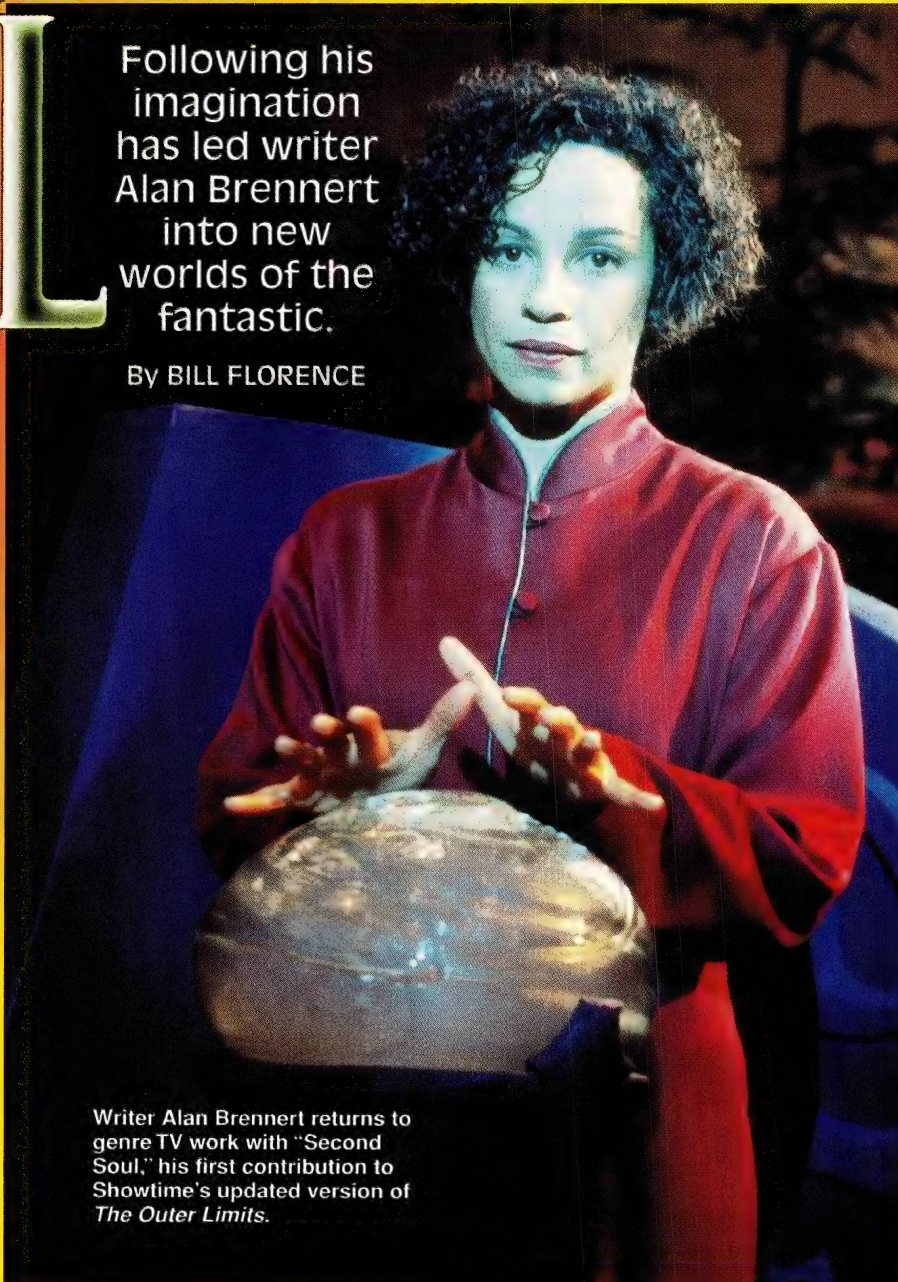


Photo: Doug Curran

Writer Alan Brennert returns to genre TV work with "Second Soul," his first contribution to Showtime's updated version of *The Outer Limits*.

All Outer Limits Photos: Copyright 1995 Showtime



He offers an example of the odd way many of his stories are born: "When I was 17 or 18, there was a popular song by the Stylistics called 'You Are Everything.' There was a line in it that went something like, 'I was walking down the street, I saw someone ahead, I thought it was you, and then you turned around, and it wasn't you.' That line triggered an entire story for me, called 'The Second Soul.' It's about a future in which aliens come to Earth, saying, 'Our host bodies are dying, our planet is dying. Give us your dead and we'll make them live again.' So these aliens take over dead human bodies and live out a normal life span. And it's about what happens when a man encounters his girl friend, who has died and been resurrected." Twenty years later, like the deceased characters in the story, "Second Soul" has come back to life as the first of Brennert's scripts for the new *Outer Limits*.

### Lonely Nights

"Fantasy," rather than "science fiction," is the label that best fits his writing, Brennert insists. "But fantasy with a small 'f.' One of the problems with writing the fantasy I write is that it *doesn't* really exist as a marketing category. In terms of commercial market designation, fantasy generally means elves, dragons and unicorns, and none of that stuff particularly interests me. What does interest me is that kind of urban contemporary fantasy which was pioneered in the 1940s in John W. Campbell's fantasy magazine, *Unknown*. The lineal descendent of that was Rod Serling's *The Twilight Zone*, Serling, whether he knew it or not, was picking up a mantle that had been created by people like Campbell and Thorne Smith, and that was what I grew up on. I love contemporary stories in which reality is slightly skewed. I also agree with H.G. Wells' dictum about one fantastic element per story. When I sit down to write, I prefer to limit myself to one fantasy device per story, then explore it."

The 1973 Clarion writers' workshop in speculative fiction got him started. "I had already been selling short stories at that point, but Clarion was very useful in that it taught me a certain amount of discipline," Brennert says. "I had to write a story a week. I had to deal with criticism, of which we all got our share, particularly from Harlan Ellison. It was just a good professional milieu to be immersed in for six weeks. I learned about markets and submissions, and I got a good feel for the life of a professional writer."

Throughout college, Brennert sold stories to *Analog*, *Infinity 5* and *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. As a college senior, he wrote his first novel, *City of Masques*, an SF thriller about a small boutique in Beverly Hills specializing in psychological conditioning. For a price, you can be brainwashed to believe you're anybody you want to be. An actor becomes involved

**BILL FLORENCE**, veteran *STARLOG* correspondent, profiled Patti Yasutake in *STARLOG SF EXPLORER* #6.



"It's about what happens when a man encounters his girl friend, who has died and been resurrected," explains Brennert of "Second Soul."

Photo: Doug Curran

with a movie studio that uses this masquing process on its players to create ultra-realistic characters in their productions, and things go slowly out of control.

To Brennert's amazement, a publisher bought *City of Masques*. "It was typical of a first novel in that it had lots of energy but almost *no* structure," he admits. "I was floored when it actually sold! I didn't even have an agent. Playboy Press liked it, had me do some revisions and then published it."

### "I would love to be primarily a novelist and short story writer."

The novel promptly sank without a trace. "It sold something like 10,000 copies in paperback, which is the equivalent of oblivion," laughs Brennert. "It wasn't the world's greatest novel. It didn't quite deserve oblivion, but still, I'm not going to bring it back into print until I've had an opportunity to revise it."

After college, Brennert turned to the television industry for work. "I always knew I wanted to [write for Hollywood]," he says. "I grew up on TV and movies as much as I did on books and short stories."

Brennert says the 1969 TV movie *Silent Night, Lonely Night* was a "seminal influence." Based on a play by Robert Anderson,

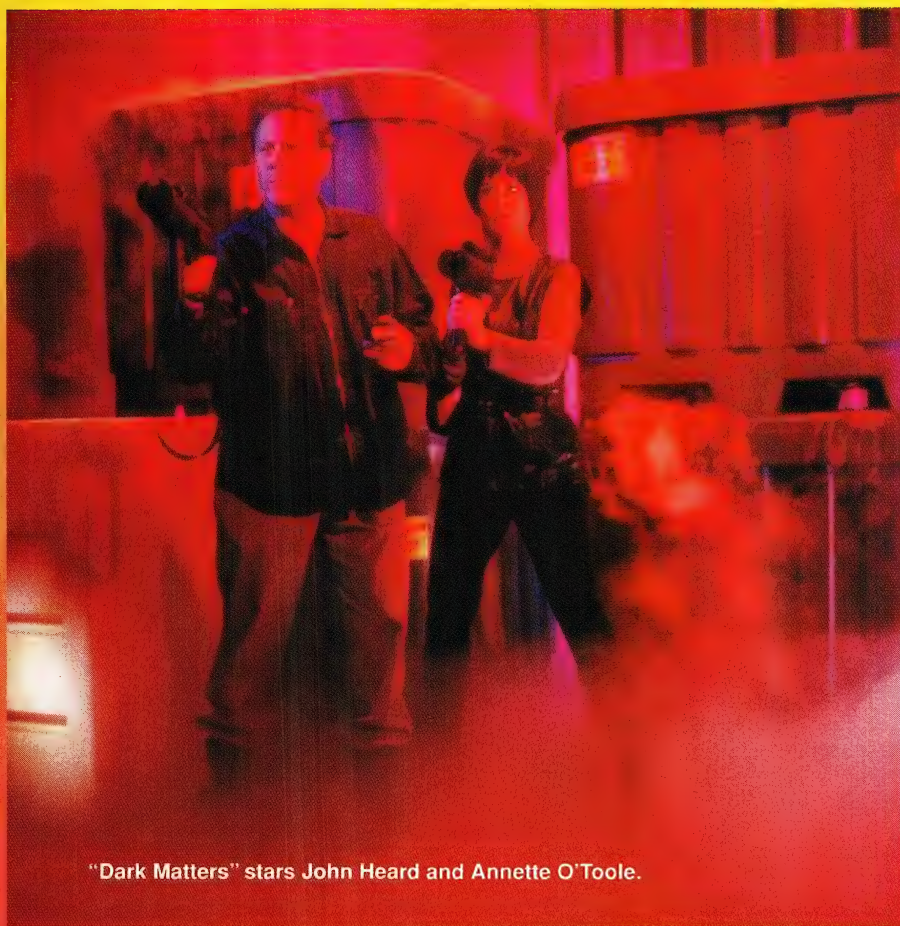
the film was a character story of two lonely people who find some comfort in each other's company during Christmas. "That movie, and TV shows like the original *Twilight Zone*—especially such episodes as 'Walking Distance' and 'The Changing of the Guard'—were things that moved me. I wanted to move people in the same way."

His first TV script sale, "Disco Devil," was to Bruce Lansbury and Anne Collins at *Wonder Woman*. "They are two of the nicest people in the universe," says Brennert. "I ended up writing four scripts for *Wonder Woman*, and I had a lot of fun doing it. Still, almost without exception, they came out terribly. I don't blame Bruce and Anne for that; it was the cheap Warner Bros. machinery. Actually, 'The Girl With the Gift for Disaster' turned out to be something I *could* look at without wincing. It was rushed into production for one reason or another, so there wasn't time to get creative input from 15 different sources."

When Lansbury and Collins moved over to Universal's *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* as supervising producer and story editor, Brennert went with them. "I had been a fan of the comic strip when I was a kid," he explains. "I had the collected works of *Buck Rogers* and I had read the original novel on which the comic strip was based. So when the opportunity came up to join the staff of the new *Buck Rogers* TV show, I thought, 'This could be fun.' Famous last words!"

Brennert's experience on *Buck Rogers* was anything but fun. He stayed with the series long enough to pen several episodes,





"Dark Matters" stars John Heard and Annette O'Toole.

but quibbles with actor Gil Gerard over the writers' handling of the title character escalated to all-out war. "It was regretful, because I *did* believe in the show's potential to be a hit," he says. "But it was no longer fun to write."

## Kindred Scripts

Looking to put this experience behind him, Brennert devoted himself to another novel. Published in 1984, *Kindred Spirits* is the bittersweet tale of Michael and Ginny, two lonely people who meet in the space between life and death and help each other find the life and love they've both always wanted. The story's poignant, highly introspective nature is a Brennert trademark.

"I'm introspective, but I'm not tremendously introverted," Brennert comments. "Like most writers, much of my life is internal. Spending so many hours a day alone in a room with your computer is practically an occupational hazard."

The beginning of *Kindred Spirits* finds the two characters stuck in unfulfilling jobs and the prospect of another lonely Christmas weighing heavily on them. Each attempts suicide on Christmas Eve, but neither is successful. Instead they find themselves neither dead nor alive, wandering the streets of New York, unseen and unheard, while their bodies are rushed to the hospital.

Brennert felt compelled to rewrite "Healer" as a short story. "The original on *The Twilight Zone* was such a botch," he maintains.

Brennert points out that he was not suicidal when he wrote *Kindred Spirits*, but admits some of the feelings he ascribed to the characters were his own. "I had just moved up to Los Angeles from Long Beach, where I had attended Long Beach State. I was in graduate

school at UCLA, and I didn't know many people there. I was living in a one-room apartment, feeling particularly lonely and full of angst, I suppose, and an idle thought occurred to me: 'I should just jump off a freeway overpass.' That was followed quickly by a second thought: 'I would probably just wind up being a ghost wandering up and down the San Diego Freeway.' A light bulb went off in my head—what an interesting idea! It transmogrified into a New York setting, but that was pretty much the genesis of *Kindred Spirits*.

"I never seriously considered suicide," he continues. "One of the purposes of fiction for me as a writer is therapy. It helps me work out problems and emotions that I may not otherwise have a way of coping with. Having Michael, my surrogate in the novel, attempt that drastic way out, was a way of assuring that I never would. I could explore the consequences of his action without having to actually do it."

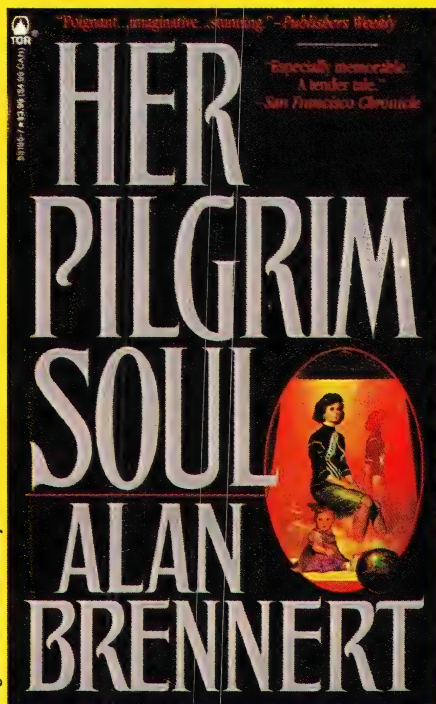
"At the same time, I hasten to point out that Michael is *not* me. There's a lot of Michael that is invented—many of the details of his life. But there was a part of me that felt as lonely as he did, certainly while I was in grad school. And there's a good deal of me in Ginny, too. In the book, Ginny remembers going to her grandparents' farm and playing with a dog named Teddy, who was dying. That was actually my uncle's dog. Even then, when I was eight years old, I knew he was dying. Later, I wrote him into the book."

One can't help but notice the similarity between the ghostly state of Michael and Ginny and that of Patrick Swayze's character in the 1990 blockbuster film *Ghost*. Brennert certainly noticed. "It's tremendously frustrating," he observes. "In fact, *Kindred Spirits* started out as a screenplay. It was optioned a couple times by ABC Circle Films, then abandoned by them. I have tried off and on since writing it in 1978 to get it done as a movie. When *Ghost* came out, I had simultaneous feelings of admiration and utter despair. *Ghost* is a wonderful movie. I can see why it got made and *Kindred Spirits* didn't. *Ghost* has the murder mystery angle, it has screwball com-



edy touches with Whoopi Goldberg. Those are all much more commercial elements. *Kindred Spirits* is essentially a small, introspective story.





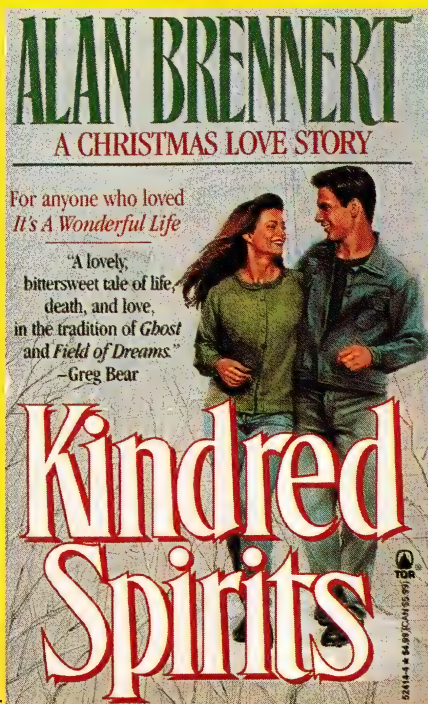
"Her Pilgrim Soul" was not only a very special episode of *The Twilight Zone*, but adapting it for the stage was a dream come true for the writer.

That's always a hard sell in Hollywood, particularly with fantasy."

As with most of his works, Brennert did not consciously set out to deliver a message with *Kindred Spirits*. His exploration of the characters helped him find the message while forming a beginning, middle and end to the story. "Any message presents itself to me as I'm writing," he offers. "The book's actual ending didn't occur to me until I was about three-fourths through. I didn't know exactly how their lives were going to turn out until I had gotten to know them a little better. *Kindred Spirits* says we grow stronger with every relationship we have. We bring something to all relationships, even if we don't wind up staying together forever."

Happy endings aren't commonplace in Brennert's fiction. "The purpose of fiction for me is to move people. You can move them to think, or to cry, or to laugh. I tend to lean toward engaging people's emotions, because that's what interests me as a reader. And sometimes those endings are happy, sometimes sad, sometimes bittersweet. It's a bit of a cop-out to have pat happy endings in fiction. Unhappy endings are a little more memorable. I think of the things that stuck with me from my childhood, things like *Les Misérables*—not exactly a happy ending there."

Any product's packaging can affect sales, Brennert acknowledges, and the cover art on the first printing of *Kindred Spirits* was a disaster. "Tor, the publisher, will admit to several mistakes. First, the cover was a bizarre reflective material. When the light hit it, it coruscated with yellow, green and purple. It was very eye-catching, but it was difficult to lay artwork on top of that. They had to do it



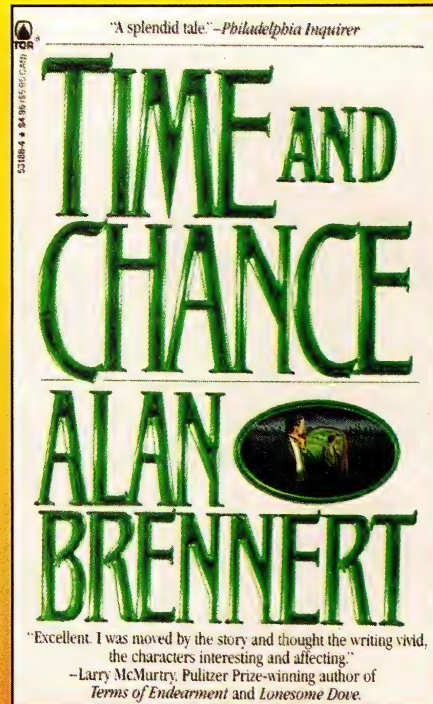
The covers of "Kindred Spirits," the despair-tinged tale of two lonely people who attempt suicide, have never completely satisfied Brennert.

in a white wash. The stuff was so reflective, my friend once told me, 'Alan, *Kindred Spirits* is the book I would most want with me if I were stranded on a desert island, because I could use it to signal passing planes.' And that's about the only good function that I can think of for that cover!" Brennert laughs.

### Timely Chances

In the author's opinion, *Time and Chance*, published in 1990, is his best novel to date. Richard Cochrane, a successful Broadway actor, finds himself disillusioned with life. He wishes he could go back and take another path, to lead a different life than the one he has chosen. He gets his wish one mysterious night when he meets himself—Rick Cochrane—on the sidewalk in front of Rick's house. This Cochrane married his childhood girl friend and now has a 13-year-old daughter and eight-month-old son. But the marriage is disintegrating, and Rick is losing ground to a deep-seated rage.

Rick and Richard decide to switch places, so each can experience the



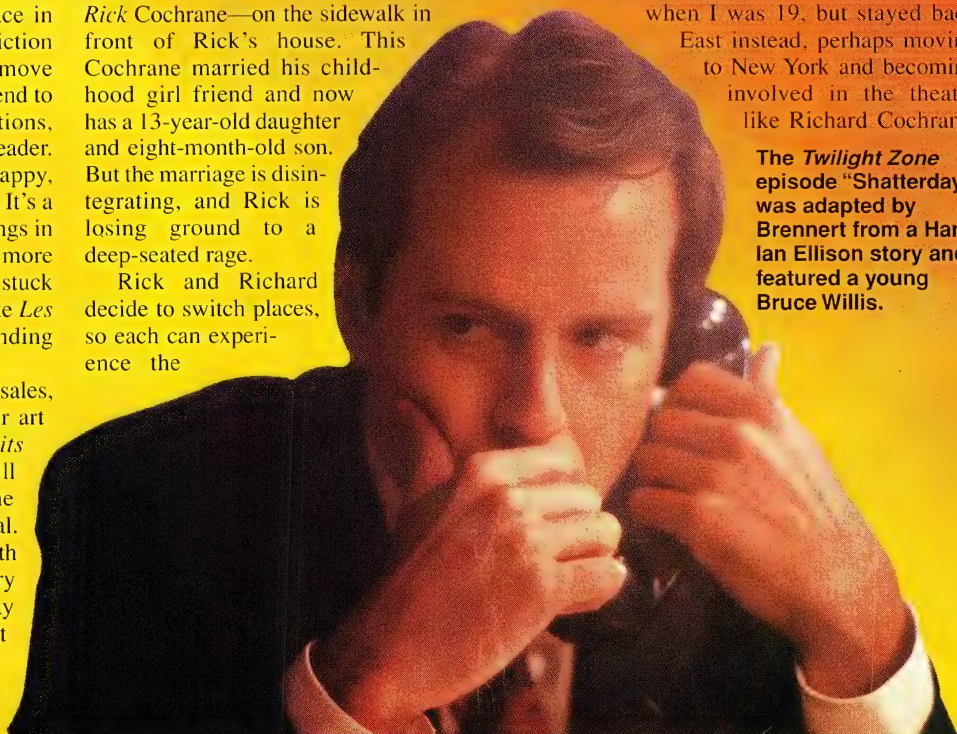
"I would say it's my most successful book creatively," Brennert states of *Time and Chance*, his moving tale of paths not taken.

life that might have been. Richard hopes to set things right in his counterpart's life, while Rick is eager to leave his domestic troubles behind and sample the thrill of being an actor.

"Everybody is fascinated by the concept of 'what if?'" says Brennert. "As in, 'What if I had taken this turn instead of that one?' I was heading into my mid-30s, and I was beginning to think along these lines."

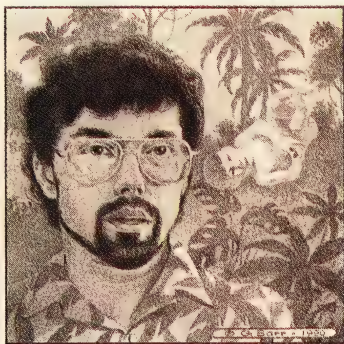
As the book developed, Brennert confronted some of the key choices he had made in his own life. "When I was growing up in New Jersey, I harbored some ambitions to be a playwright. *Time and Chance* had its genesis in me speculating on what my life might have been like had I not moved to California when I was 19, but stayed back East instead, perhaps moving to New York and becoming involved in the theater like Richard Cochrane.

**The *Twilight Zone* episode "Shatterday" was adapted by Brennert from a Harlan Ellison story and featured a young Bruce Willis.**





# AUTHOR'S CHOICE *Monthly* Issue 17



**Alan Brennert**

"Ma Qui," one of the stories in Brennert's *Author's Choice Monthly* collection, earned the author a Hugo Award.

Writing *Time and Chance* was my way of vicariously experiencing a life in the theater.

"The flip side of that is the kind of personal life that Rick has and Richard longs for. Richard wonders what would have happened if he had married his college sweetheart and settled down. Part of me was working out, through my fiction, a scenario of what might have happened if I had settled down with the girl whom I had had a mad, passionate crush on when I was in high school."

Some passages in *Time and Chance* are painfully autobiographical. One scene in particular, in which Richard goes to his mother's house shortly after learning of her death, was written almost verbatim as it really happened to Brennert. "There was even a note from my mother to me, just as in the novel. It was tremendously cathartic to put that experience down on paper. In some ways, I feel like don't fully come to terms with relationships, people and tragic events in my life unless I write about them."

*Time and Chance* proved to be one of the best writing experiences of his career. "It came out effortlessly. It was a complex book to write, because I had to chart what was going on concurrently in each world. There were interconnections between the worlds, too, and there were little resonances back and forth between the characters that I had to keep track of. But I sat down every day to work on that book and I had the greatest time. Generally, I'm not one who finds writing to be a chore. I can sometimes find deadlines to be a chore,

but I always enjoy the act of writing. This book in particular I really enjoyed, and I would say it's my most successful book creatively."

Following *Time and Chance* came *Her Pilgrim Soul and Other Stories* (1990), a collection of eight tales written between 1976 and 1989. The title selection and two others, "Healer" and "Voices in the Earth," were adaptations of *Twilight Zone* episodes.



"It stars Mykelti Williamson and Rae Dawn Chong. Brennert reveals of 'Second Soul.' 'I'm pretty excited.'"

Limits Photo: Doug Curran

In the tragic "Queen of the Magic Kingdom," a woman goes to Disneyland and decides she never wants to leave. Brennert explains that "Queen" is based on a true story. "It was 1974, and I had just moved to California. I was going for my first trip to Disneyland with several college friends, one of whom was a part-time security guard on Tom Sawyer Island. He told us about a woman he had encountered sitting at the dock of the *Mark Twain* riverboat who essentially said everything the woman in the story says, ending with that she wanted to live in Disneyland. For the rest of the day, I kept staring off into space, thinking about this, haunted by it. I worked backward from that point, giving the woman a backstory, and I wrote the whole thing the next day. It's still my favorite short story. There's an element of truth to it that I didn't invent. It came from life."

## Twilight Tales

"Healer," a morality tale about a small-time burglar who steals an ancient stone with fantastic healing powers, sprang from Brennert's desire to write a story about evangelism and faith healing. He wrote it as a *Twilight Zone* script, but was so dissatisfied with the filmed episode that he took his name off the credits. "We had a director who had no clue what to do with it," he says. "So when I wrote the short story, I decided to take advantage of the fact that the original on *The Twilight Zone* was such a botch that I could essentially reinvent it. That's when I came up with the idea of flashbacks to Teotihuacan and alternating the story's points-of-view between present and past. That's one of the joys of writing prose—you can invent an entire

"I ended up writing four scripts for *Wonder Woman*, and I had a lot of fun doing it," admits Brennert.





world. I enjoy doing the research and invoking a world that never was."

"Jamie's Smile" offers a frightening look at a deformed, semi-diabolical 11-year-old child and the machinations of his dysfunctional family. Brennert says the story is a thematic sequel to Daniel Keyes' novel *The Touch*, about a man who works at a nuclear power plant and is contaminated with radiation. "Keyes is one of my favorite writers. He wrote *Flowers for Algernon*, my favorite SF novel [filmed as *Charly*], and he was a big influence on me as a writer. I wondered what would have happened if that character had impregnated his wife and somehow, the baby had come to term. That was the trigger for 'Jamie's Smile.'"

He originally wrote "The Third Sex," a story about a person who is neither male nor female, for *The Twilight Zone*. But CBS balked. "They went into cardiac arrhythmia," Brennert clarifies. "I haven't seen a more apoplectic response from a network liaison before or since."

## "One of the purposes of fiction for me as a writer is therapy."

The network reaction was a little surprising to Brennert, considering that CBS had repeatedly requested more provocative stories. "I said, 'Fine, I have a provocative story.' And the script was a lot less graphic and less overtly sexual than the story ultimately became. We were, after all, doing a TV show. But even the thematic concerns were things they didn't want to touch with a 10-foot pole."

In "Voices in the Earth," another *Twilight Zone* adaptation, a sentimental professor travels with a mining expedition to Earth centuries after the planet has been abandoned and left for dead. There, he alone finds the specters of inhabitants from long ago. Ultimately, he shows them the way to re-create life on the planet, and Earth is reborn.

"It was the second season, and we had been having difficulty getting stories approved by CBS," Brennert explains. "I had been thinking about the tradition in science fiction in which Earth is abandoned, and humankind has moved on to the stars. I've always been faintly offended by the central conceit of such stories, which says that once you've fouled and gutted the Earth, you can simply move on to another planet and do the same damn thing! This was my response."

As filmed for *The Twilight Zone*, the story "was more successfully realized than 'Healer' was, but it could have been better. I tore the retina in my left eye a week before we started shooting it, so I was absent from the production. Later, I found that Curtis Harrington, who had been my choice for director, made some choices I found regrettable. The other problem, which was perhaps beyond his control, was that the episode

moved very slowly. One reason for this was that Martin Balsam was getting on in years, and several scenes were shot in the San Fernando Valley at the height of summer, with the actors in hot space suits. So, Marty wasn't exactly tearing through those lines. Then, I had to go into the editing room and cut the show down, because CBS changed us from an hour show to a half-hour. The more I cut, the better it got. But it still wasn't great."

## Soulful Pilgrimages

"Her Pilgrim Soul," the collection's title, has special significance for Brennert. "It's the most personal TV show I ever wrote, and one of the most personal things I've ever done in prose," he reveals. "It didn't start out as such, but it turned into a goodbye to a woman I loved very much. Her name was Asha PenAmber, and I dedicated the story to her. She died of leukemia much too early. It was 1982, shortly after I had completed *Kindred Spirits*. I joined the *Twilight Zone* staff in 1984, and for those two years in between, I was having a hard time dealing with her passing. Writing 'Her Pilgrim Soul' was a cathartic experience; it allowed me to say goodbye to her in a way I hadn't been able to in life."

In the story, Kevin, a science professor, captures a woman's spirit in a column of light. The woman, Nola, first appears as a fetus, then ages at an alarming rate—10 years every day. Kevin finds himself falling in love with the apparition, even as his marriage is falling apart. Nola turns out to be Kevin's wife in his previous life; she had died in childbirth and he had carried his grief from one life into the next. Her ghostly return has been for his sake—to heal his pain and mend his relationship with his wife in this life.

"The episode started out almost as a puzzle story," says Brennert. "The reasons for Nola being in the hologram were entirely different at first than what ultimately got on the air. Sometimes when I write, the fantasy device or gimmick occurs to me before the story does. I can't successfully write that way unless I have an emotional parallel for the fantasy device. In 'Her Pilgrim Soul,' I started with the fantasy gimmick, and CBS saw that. They said, quite rightly, that it needed to be more personal, that it needed a better emotional hook. Part of me knew all along what that story should have been but didn't want to write it. I didn't want to touch the open wound just yet. As I reworked the story, it turned into the relationship between Asha and me. There's nothing in Nola that is taken from Asha's life; nor is there anything in Kevin's life that has a parallel in my own. But in the

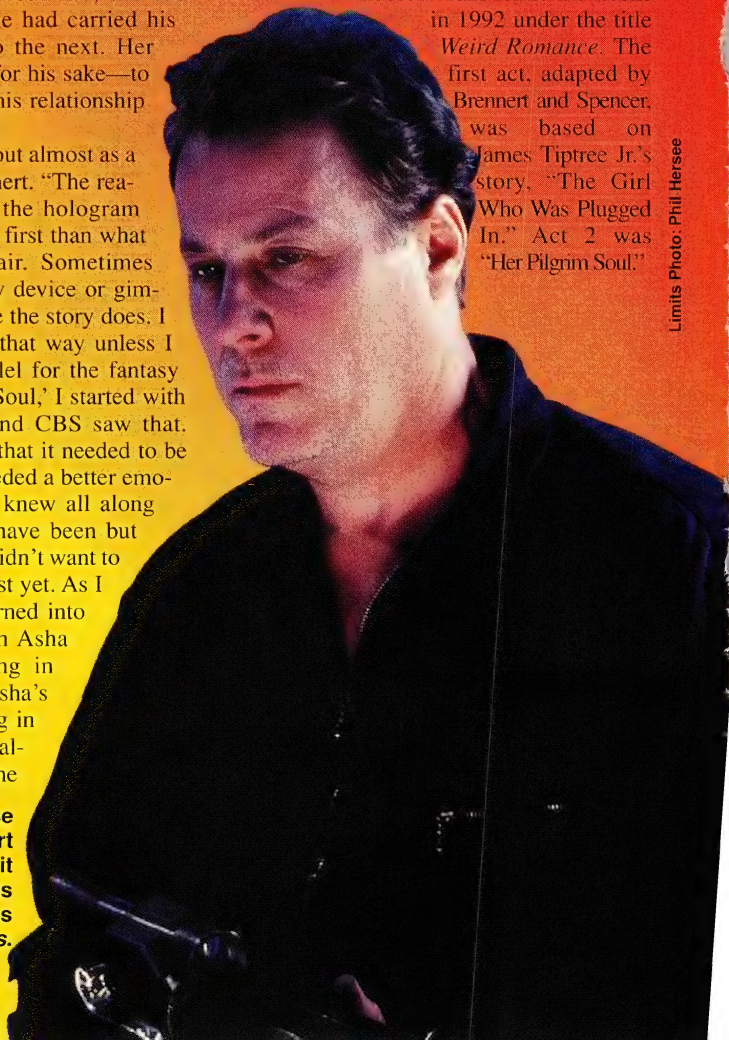
**He enjoys his prose writing, but Brennert acknowledges that it doesn't pay nearly as well as writing for shows like *The Outer Limits*.**

relationship between those two, and in the spirituality of Nola's character, there are very strong parallels to Asha."

"Her Pilgrim Soul" got Brennert more attention than anything else he has ever written for TV. "What I find really special about the story is that I didn't write it with the intention of opening doors," Brennert states. "I wrote it from my heart, and that's the kind of thing people notice." The episode became one of the new *Twilight Zone*'s most popular shows, earning him a nomination for the Writers Guild Award in 1987. As a writing sample, "Her Pilgrim Soul" got Brennert work on *China Beach* and *L.A. Law*, and it brought him to the attention of Alan (Little Shop of Horrors) Menken and David Spencer, who wanted to adapt the story as a science fiction musical. Brennert explains: "David, a science fiction fan, showed 'Her Pilgrim Soul' to Alan as an example of the kind of emotional stories science fiction can tell. As David tells it, by the show's end, Alan was in tears, saying, 'I want to adapt this story!'"

Brennert told them the story was highly personal and he wasn't sure he wanted to hand it over to someone else. Menken and Spencer promptly asked Brennert to write the adaptation himself. "The next thing I knew, I was a librettist," Brennert chuckles. "So, 'Her Pilgrim Soul' was responsible for the realization of a lifelong dream I had—to write for the theater."

The production was one of two one-act, science fiction love story musicals which ran in New York for seven weeks in 1992 under the title *Weird Romance*. The first act, adapted by Brennert and Spencer, was based on James Tiptree Jr.'s story, "The Girl Who Was Plugged In." Act 2 was "Her Pilgrim Soul."



Limits Photo: Phil Hersee



In 1991, Pulphouse Publishing asked Brennert if he would provide a 30,000-word collection of short fiction for an issue of *Author's Choice Monthly*. An oversized paperback magazine, *Author's Choice Monthly* features a different writer each month. Issue #17 was devoted to Brennert, who named his collection of four stories *Ma Qui and Other Phantoms*.

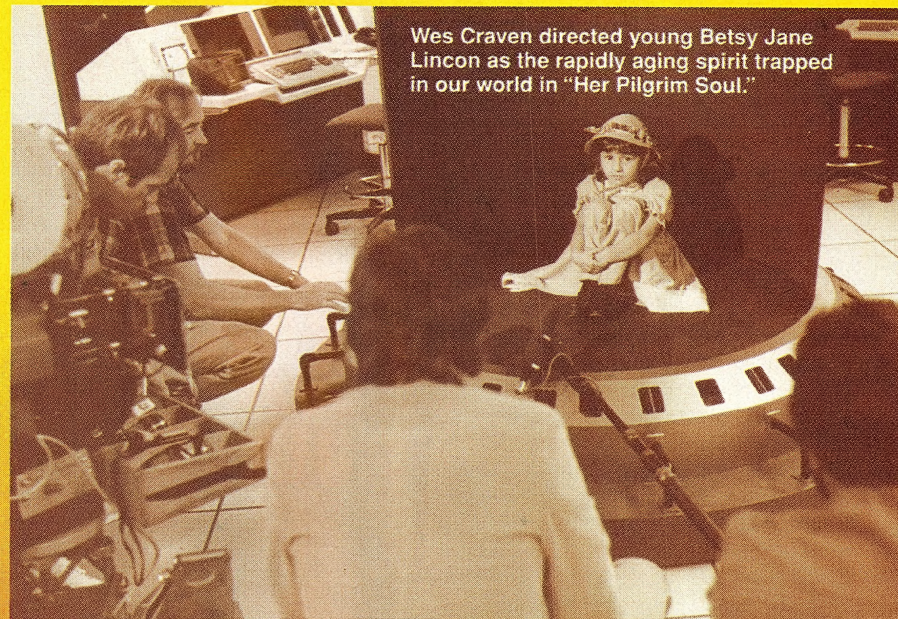
"Ma Qui," a horrific tale set in Vietnam, earned the writer a Hugo Award in 1992. The story came to Brennert while he was immersed in the world of *China Beach*, for which he wrote two episodes. (One of these, "Where the Boys Are," earned Brennert another nomination for the Writers Guild Award in 1990.) "Futures," the only story written exclusively for this collection, features a man with a peculiar problem: He sees the people around him age rapidly before his eyes, then return to normal. "I wrote it while I was on the staff of a very short-lived TV show working for a monstrous, psychotic producer," Brennert recalls, "and it was a tremendous relief to go to my office after having dealt with him and write something just for me."

## "Unhappy endings are a little more memorable."

"Ghost Story," a cryptic, nightmarish piece more like a poem than a prose story, is the oldest tale in the book and the one Brennert remembers least. ("I can't remember a single thing about its creation," he wrote in the book's introduction.) But "Stage Whisper," which centers on an aging, gay writer and drama professor, evokes an instant response. "I had some gay friends in college," he says. "I wrote it while I was at UCLA, where I was in the film department, an adjunct of the theater department."

"I was mainly interested in the idea of what happens to you as a writer if you realize that everything you've written has dated," he goes on. "What happens if you look back at things you wrote 40 years ago and they no longer seem pertinent or real to you? I used Tennessee Williams as the model for the character of Ted Lamarr, because that was—and is—my opinion of some of the characters in Williams' plays. The female characters in particular never seem to ring true to me, with certain exceptions: *A Streetcar Named Desire* is certainly one of his most full-bodied works and will stand the test of time. But there are other characters who seem to be clichéd or paper-thin."

Does Brennert share Lamarr's fear that some day, his fiction will be lost and forgotten? "I think every writer has that kind of fear," he remarks. "You feel it particularly as a prose writer. I look around at the writers I grew up with who had an influence on me, like Theodore Sturgeon. He's one of the most brilliant writers of science fiction, and



Design & Layout: Jim McLennan

he's almost completely out of print. Robert Nathan wrote *Portrait of Jennie*; he was one of the primary architects of the urban contemporary fantasy—and he's completely out of print. I look at that and can't help but be somewhat terrified of the future. But at the same time, I can't let it paralyze me. I'm writing for a contemporary audience and I hope that my work will stay in print and survive the test of time, but there's nothing I can do about it. That's the realization Lamarr comes to at the end of 'Stage Whisper.'"

As if short fiction, novels, TV scripts and musicals weren't enough, Brennert has also written comics and a graphic novel. Two of his comics tales appear in *The Greatest Batman Stories Ever Told*. "To Kill a Legend" is a parallel worlds story, and "The Autobiography of Bruce Wayne" is the tale of how Batman and Catwoman fell in love and got married. "It's a love story with characters that we always knew were going to get together, but nobody ever told this story before," Brennert says.

The graphic novel *Batman: Holy Terror*, is set in a world in which "the Reformation continued and the United States is a fundamentalist theocracy. It has some pretty strong stuff in it. It's my attack on the religious right, which infuriates me more than anything I can think of," Brennert says with a chuckle. "I also wrote an issue of *Daredevil*. I wrote the first issue after Frank Miller left in 1982. *Daredevil* was my favorite Marvel Comics character when I was growing up."

## Altered Egos

Brennert turns back to the present for a few thoughts on *The Outer Limits*. "I'm pretty excited about the rough cut of my first episode. It stars Mykelti Williamson and Rae Dawn Chong. I just handed in my second script for them, and I'll be doing three more."

He's also writing a feature script for Trilogy Entertainment. Brennert won't talk about this project yet, except to say his screenplay is an adaptation of a classic mys-

tery-horror novel.

Then, there's *Alter Ego*, another screenplay Brennert is shopping around. "It's a psychological, erotic thriller with an element to it that's rather imaginative. It's something fantasy fans can appreciate. I'm trying to get that off the ground as a TV movie."

And finally, Brennert recently nailed down a script commitment from Fox for a pilot for a new late-night, SF/fantasy/horror anthology show. The author can barely contain his enthusiasm as he discusses the project. "I've been trying to do this my entire career. My friend Mark Evanier and I are co-creators. I'm writing the pilot and he's the executive producer. If Fox likes my script, they'll order a pilot, and if they like the pilot, they'll order a series. It's an hour show with two half-hour stories per episode. My pilot script includes one original story and one adaptation of another writer's story."

In the final analysis, does Brennert prefer screenwriting to prose writing, or vice versa? "In an ideal world, I would love to be primarily a novelist and short story writer, and write TV or film only when I feel like it. But right now I can't afford to write books full time. TV writing is more lucrative; the truth is I could get by on a fraction of what I make writing TV. Unfortunately, the advances I've been getting for my fiction don't even approach a fraction of that! Prose writing is essentially a very expensive hobby for me. It took me nine months to write *Time and Chance*. I might be able to write other books more quickly, but still, I'm looking at six to eight months to write a book, and I'm not getting anywhere near the kind of advances I need to support myself for that period of time. I have to save money from screenwriting to subsidize writing books. I'm perfectly willing to do that, but it would be nice to support myself with my books and short fiction."

"Still, I can't complain," Alan Brennert concludes. "I have a nice combination of screen and prose projects on my plate, and I'm very excited at the opportunities that lie ahead." ☆

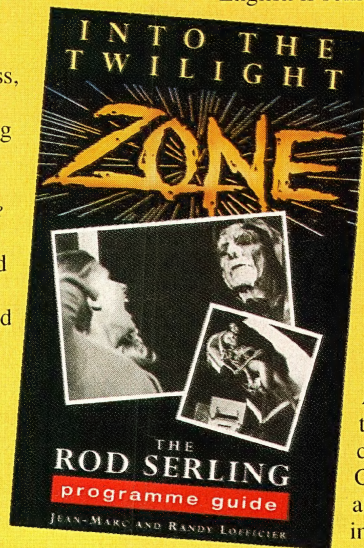
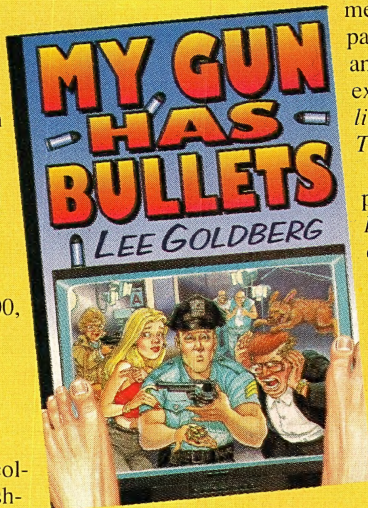


# LINER NOTES

**T**here's no denying it. And there's no mystery to it. I simply can't put it off any longer. I gotta buy more bookcases. Comics, paperbacks, magazines and videos overwhelm my apartment. They're just so many of them—and more pile up every month. Indeed, I need a couple of bookshelves to just keep up with the newest tomes from various STARLOG writers. Let me tell you about the latest volumes.

There are, of course, the current entries in the *Destroyer* paperback series created by Warren Murphy & Richard Sapir and authored by STARLOG's Will Murray (Gold Eagle, \$4.99@): #98, *Target of Opportunity* (with some of its Hollywood moviemaking elements derived from Will's reporting for STARLOG), #99, *The Color of Fear* and #100, *Last Rites* (a grand opus, celebrating the 25-year-old series' 100th adventure, due out in August). These are great, funny, sarcastic action yarns—full of thrills and laughter. By the way, Will is editing *Tales of Zothique* (Necromicon Press, about \$12), a complete collection of classic *Weird Tales* writer Clark Ashton Smith's science fantasies (with restored texts, in proper story order). It's a long overdue attempt to bring this legendary writer to a new generation of readers.

The *Destroyer* books complement the mystery series I've noted over the last two issues. And here's the beginning of another series as my old pal Lee Goldberg unveils a terrific mystery/thriller/comedy, *My Gun Has Bullets* (St. Martin's Press, \$21). Lee and partner Bill Rabkin, both former STARLOG correspondents, are now supervising producers and writers of *The Cosby Mysteries*. Their past series work includes scripts for *Sliders*, *Murphy's Law*, *Cobra*, *Baywatch*, *Love & Curses*, *Likely Suspects*, *Diagnosis: Murder* (complete with a character named after me) and *Spenser: For Hire*. Now, Lee has taken all that Hollywood experience (good, bad and ugly) and made it the background of this novel. The hero is Charlie Willis, just your usual LA cop until he pulls over TV whodunit superstar Miss Agatha, who, uhh, shoots him. For real. And what do panicky studio and network execs do to cover up the crime? Why, they give Charlie his very own TV show, and that's when the lunacy really starts. And I didn't even mention the hitman-turned-TV producer, the cannibalistic canine star and all sorts of TV shows almost too strange to be real (like *Hollywood and Vine*: "half-man, half-plant, all cop."). I laughed and laughed while reading this novel, frightening fellow commuters and small children alike. Good reviews have already prompted Lee to begin a sequel with a background in—you guessed it—science-fiction television. I can't wait.



Meanwhile, along with STARLOG's Randy & Jean-Marc Lofficier, Lee and Bill have co-authored *Science Fiction Filmmaking in the 1980s* (McFarland & Co, Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640; \$37.50). It assembles many of their interviews published years ago in STARLOG, *L'Ecran Fantastique* and other magazines while covering *Blade Runner*, *ALIENS*, *RoboCop*, *Cocoon*, *Return of the Jedi*, *Star Trek*, *Mad Max*, *Enemy Mine* and other '80s SF movies. All in all, it's a candid chronicle of genre moviemaking with an introduction by (of all people) me. Randy & Jean-Marc, Lee and Bill also have a companion volume, *Fantasy Filmmaking in the 1980s* (with an introduction by comics legend Marv Wolfman). It'll explore *Back to the Future*, *Buckaroo Banzai*, *Gremlins*, *Ladyhawke*, *Highlander*, *Ghostbusters* and *Big Trouble in Little China*. Expect it this fall.

On their own, Jean-Marc & Randy Lofficier have produced *Into the Twilight Zone: The Rod Serling Programme Guide* (Virgin, \$5.95). It's the perfect complement to Marc Scott Zicree's *The Twilight Zone Companion*, the definitive book on the classic series (which, alas, covers the CBS and syndicated revivals only slightly). Thankfully, the Lofficier tome features complete episode guides to both the CBS and syndicated redos, comprehensively filling in what the *Companion* lacks. There's also a look at Serling's life and career, a *Night Gallery* episode guide and all-new interviews with *Twilight* creators. *Into the Twilight Zone* is a book of both shadow and substance, but then it would have to be, wouldn't it?

I've mentioned it before, albeit briefly, but let me note that Joe Nazzaro's *The Making of Red Dwarf* (Penguin, £7.99) is out in England, Australia and Canada (as well as other places where English is sometimes spoken). It's filled with all-new interviews with the cast and crew of the British cult series (which Joe has also examined in past STARLOG articles), an introduction by creators Rob Grant and Doug Naylor, bizarre revelations and other nifty stuff. If you love *Red Dwarf*, you'll love this book.

And finally, self-styled film historian Tom Weaver has yet another volume of collected interviews—the fourth, he says, in a trilogy. It's *They Fought in the Creature Features* (McFarland, of course, \$38.50, with about 100 photos). On hand are 23 SF, serial and horror stars—including John Agar, Lloyd Bridges, Jeff Morrow, Rex Reason, Anne Francis, June Lockhart, Jane Wyatt and Julie Adams. These are Tom's complete, usually exhaustive interviews, not the briefer (believe it or not), condensed versions published in STARLOG, COMICS SCENE, FANGORIA and elsewhere. It's all fascinating, intriguing, lengthy stuff, demonstrating just why Tom Weaver is the king of film historians. And you know, recently, we've even gotten him to admit that he likes four or five movies actually made after 1970.

STARLOG writers keep on producing books. So, until I get around to buying another bookcase, I guess I'll just keep piling them up. In my living room.

—David McDonnell/Editor (March 1995)

**The STARLOG Line-Up on sale now:** **STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE #11** lets Morn, the most popular alien barfly in the *Trek* Universe, speak... **FANGORIA #142** takes readers behind-the-scenes of *The Langoliers* mini-series and examines the special FX makeup of *The X-Files*... **COMICS SCENE #50** celebrates its 50th issue with a look at comics' future and the futuristic adventure *Tank Girl*... **STARLOG SCIENCE-FICTION EXPLORER #7** features interviews with Martin Landau, *Babylon 5*'s Andreas Katsulas, *X-Files* composer Mark Snow and *Beauty & the Beast* music maestro Don Davis... **STAR TREK: VOYAGER #2** continues the journey homeward, unveiling candid chats with Tim Russ, Garrett Wang and makeup FX wizard Michael Westmore... **STARLOG YEARBOOK #13** (on sale May 23) collects profiles of "Star Trek's Greatest Guest Stars" (including John de Lancie, Dame Judith Anderson, William Campbell, Michelle Forbes and Suzie Plakson) and look for **STARLOG #216**, the 19th anniversary issue, at newsstands and magazine outlets June 1.



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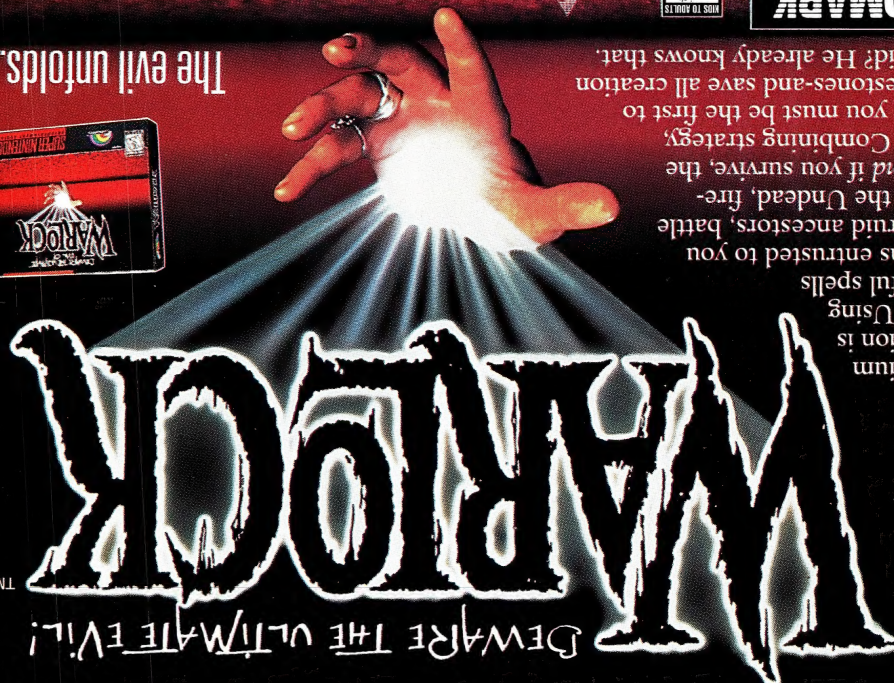
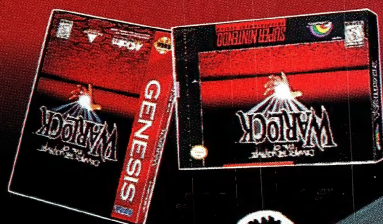
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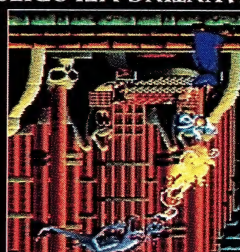


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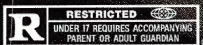
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